

# Desert

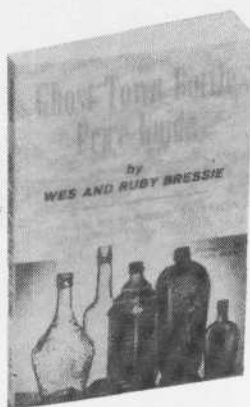
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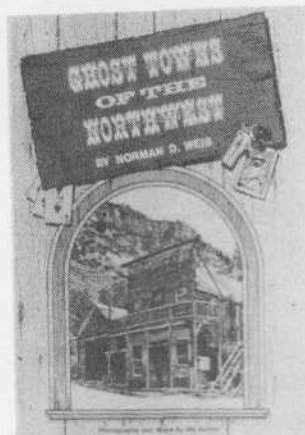


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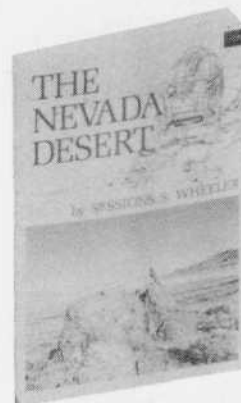
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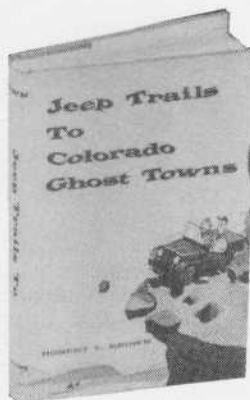
**GHOST TOWN BOTTLE PRICE GUIDE** by Wes and Ruby Bressie. A new and revised edition of their popular bottle book, first published in 1964. New section on Oriental relics, plus up-to-date values of bottles. Slick, paperback, illustrated, 124 pages, \$3.95.



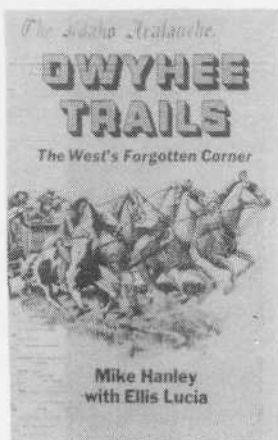
**GHOST TOWNS OF THE NORTHWEST** by Norman Wels. The ghost-town country of the Pacific Northwest, including trips to many little-known areas, is explored in this first-hand factual and interesting book. Excellent photography, maps. Hardcover, 319 pages, \$6.95.



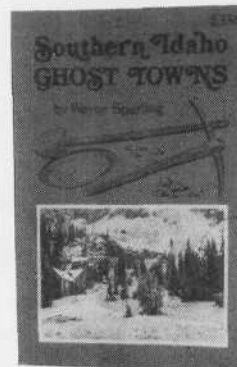
**THE NEVADA DESERT** by Sessions S. Wheeler. Provides information on Nevada's state parks, historical monuments, recreational area, and suggestions for safe, comfortable travel in the remote sections of western America. Paperback, illustrated, 168 pages, \$2.95.



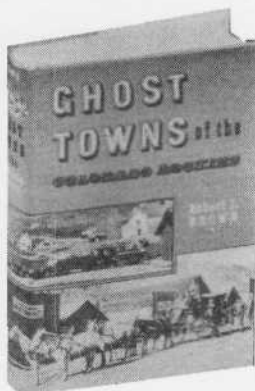
**JEEP TRAILS TO COLORADO GHOST TOWNS** by Robert L. Brown. An illustrated, detailed, informal history of life in the mining camps deep in the almost inaccessible mountain fastness of the Colorado Rockies. Fifty-eight towns are included. 239 pages, illustrated, end sheet map, Hardcover, \$7.95.



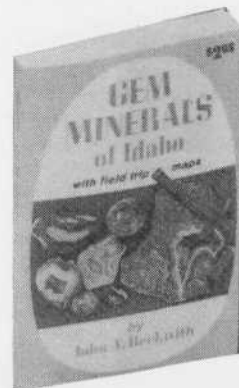
**OWYHEE TRAILS** by Mike Hanley and Ellis Lucia. The authors have teamed to present the boisterous past and intriguing present of this still wild corner of the West sometimes called the I-O-N, where Idaho, Oregon and Nevada come together. Contains interesting reading of the mining booms, Indian battles, holdups and range wars of this little known area called The Owyhees. Hardcover, 225 pages, \$7.95.



**SOUTHERN IDAHO GHOST TOWNS** by Wayne Sparling. An excellent reference describing 84 ghost towns and the history and highlights of each. Excellent maps detail the location of the camps, and 95 photographs accompany the text. Paperback, 135 pages, \$3.95.



**GHOST TOWNS OF THE COLORADO ROCKIES** by Robert L. Brown. Written by the author of Jeep Trails to Colorado Ghost Towns, this book deals with ghost towns accessible by passenger car. Gives directions and maps for finding towns along with historical backgrounds. Hardcover, 401 pages, \$6.95.



**GEM MINERALS OF IDAHO** by John A. Beckwith. Contains information on physical and optical characteristics of minerals; the history, lore and fashioning of many gems. Eleven rewarding field trips to every sort of collecting area. Slick paperback, maps and photos, 123 pages, \$2.95.

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Volume 37, Number 6

JUNE 1974

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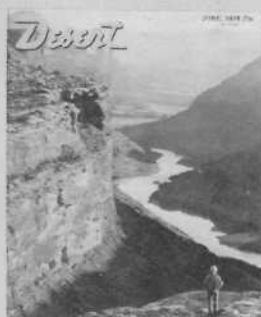
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THE COVER:  
Colorado River canyon in  
southeastern Utah, with  
the Fisher Towers and the  
La Sal mountains in the  
background. Photograph  
by David Muench, Santa  
Barbara, California.

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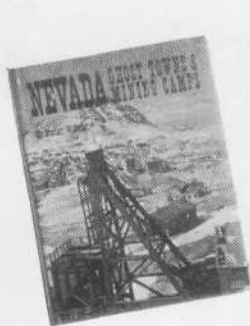
# BOOKS OF

**OUR HISTORIC DESERT, The Story of the Anza-Borrego State Park.** Text by Diana Lindsay, Edited by Richard Pourade. The largest state park in the United States, this book presents a concise and cogent history of the things which have made this desert unique. The author details the geologic beginning and traces the history from Juan Bautista de Anza and early-day settlers, through to the existence today of the huge park. Hardcover, 144 pages, beautifully illustrated, \$9.50.

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**THE NORTH AMERICAN DESERTS** by Edmund C. Jaeger. A long-time authority on all phases of desert areas and life, Dr. Jaeger's book on the North American Deserts should be carried where ever you travel. It not only describes each of the individual desert areas, but has illustrated sections on desert insects, reptiles, birds, mammals and plants. 315 pages, illustrated photographs, line drawings and maps. Hardcover, \$6.95.

**GHOST TOWN ALBUM** by Lambert Florin. Over 200 photos. Fascinating pictorial accounts of the gold mining towns of the Old West—and the men who worked them. Large format, 184 pages, profusely illustrated, originally published at \$12.50, new edition \$3.95.



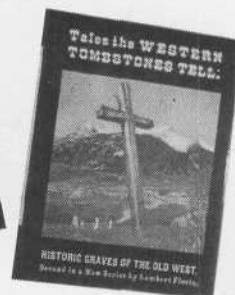
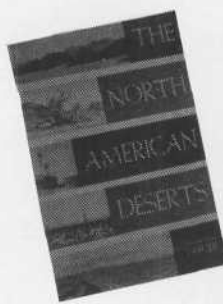
**THE CALIFORNIA MISSIONS** by the Editors of Sunset Books. A beautifully written history of California's 21 missions. One can feel, as he reads, the fervor of the padres as they gathered materials to build their churches, and an insight into history develops as the authors tell in simple prose what was going on in the world at the same time. 300 pages, complete with artful sketches and photographs, and paintings in color, hardcover, large format, \$12.75.

**NEVADA GHOST TOWNS AND MINING CAMPS** by Stanley W. Paher. Covering all of Nevada's 17 counties, Paher has documented 575 mining camps, many of which have been erased from the earth. The book contains the greatest and most complete collection of historic photographs of Nevada ever published. This, coupled with his excellent writing and map, creates a book of lasting value. Large 9x11 format, 700 photographs, hardcover, 492 pages, \$15.00.

**THE GREAT AMERICAN WEST** by James D. Horan. With over 650 illustrations, many in full color, this is the full western story from the days of the conquistadores to the 20th Century. Many rare photos never published before. Large 9x12 format, hardcover, 288 pages, originally published at \$10.00, now only \$4.95.

**FROSTY, A Raccoon to Remember** by Harriett E. Weaver. The only uniformed woman on California's State Park Ranger crews for 20 years, Harriett Weaver shares her hilarious and heart-warming experiences of being a "mother" to an orphaned baby raccoon. A delightful book for all ages. Illustrated with line-drawings by Jennifer O. Dewey, hard cover, 156 pages, \$5.95

**DICTIONARY OF PREHISTORIC INDIAN ARTIFACTS OF THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST** by Franklin Barnett. A highly informative book that both illustrates and describes Indian artifacts of the Southwest, it is a valuable guide for the person interested in archaeology and anthropology. Includes 250 major types of artifacts. Each item has a photo and definition. Paperback, 130 pages, beautifully illustrated, \$7.95.



**OLD FORTS OF THE NORTHWEST** by H. M. Hart. Over 200 photos and maps. Exciting pictorial history of the military posts that opened the West. Hardcover, beautifully illustrated, originally published at \$12.50. New Edition \$3.95.

**CORONADO'S CHILDREN** by J. Frank Doby. Originally published in 1930, this book about lost mines and buried treasures of the West is a classic and is as vital today as when first written. Dobie was not only an adventurer, but a scholar and a powerful writer. A combination of legends and factual background. Hardcover, 376 pages, \$3.95.

**LOST LEGENDS OF THE WEST** by Brad Williams and Choral Pepper. The authors examine the "lore, legends, characters and myths that grew out of the Old West." Included among the more than 20 "lost legends" are such intriguing subjects as lost bones, lost ladies, lost towns, and lost diamonds. Hardcover, illustrated, 192 pages, \$5.95.

**THREE PATHS ALONG A RIVER** by Tom Hudson. The San Luis Rey River in California's San Diego County played an important part in the history of the West. Dramatic account of the Indians, Spaniards and Americans who settled the area. Hardcover, 239 pages, \$6.00.

**DESERT PLANTS AND PEOPLE** by Sam Hicks. Tells how primitive desert dwellers find sustenance, shelter, beverages and healing medicines in nature. Hardcover, \$5.95.

**MOCKEL'S DESERT FLOWER NOTEBOOK** by Henry and Beverly Mockel. The well-known painter of desert wildflowers has combined his four-color sketches and black and white photographs to describe in detail so the layman can easily identify wildflowers, both large and small. Microscopic detail makes this an outstanding book for identification. Special compressed fiber cover which will not stain. 54 full-color illustrations with 72 life-size drawings and 39 photographs, 316 pages, \$5.95.

**TALES THE WESTERN TOMBSTONES TELL** by Lambert Florin. The famous and infamous come back to life in this great photo history including missionary, mule driver, bad guy and blacksmith—what tales their tombstones tell. Large format, 192 pages, originally published at \$12.95, now only \$3.95.

**DEATH VALLEY SCOTTY TOLD ME** by Eleanor Jordan Houston. A fascinating and unusual recount of famous Death Valley Scotty's adventures as told to the author while she and her ranger husband were Scotty's nearest neighbors in 1948. Some of these escapades have never been told before. Illustrated, 116 pages, \$1.75.

**DESERT, The American Southwest** by Ruth Kirk. Combining her knowledge of the physical characteristics of the land, and man's relation to the desert from the prehistoric past to the probable future, with her photographer's eye and her enthusiasm for a strange and beautiful country, the result of Ruth Kirk's work is an extraordinarily perceptive account of the living desert. Highly recommended. Hardcover, beautifully illustrated, 334 pages, \$10.00.



**GOLD RUSH ALBUM**, Editor in Chief Joseph Henry Jackson. 352 authentic first-hand pictures with text. The complete story of the most exciting treasure-hunt in history when some 200,000 persons sought gold in California. Originally published at \$10.00. New, complete edition only \$3.95.

**TIMBERLINE ANCIENTS** with photos by David Muench and text by Darwin Lambert. Bristlecone pines are the oldest living trees on earth. Photographer David Muench brings them to life in all their fascinating forms, and Lambert's prose is like poetry. One of the most beautiful pictorials ever published. An ideal gift. Large 11x14 format, hardcover, heavy slick paper, 128 4-color photographs, 125 pages, \$22.00.

**BALLARAT\*** Compiled by Paul Hubbard, Doris Bray and George Pipkin. Ballarat, now a ghost town in the Panamint Valley, was once a flourishing headquarters during the late 1880s and 1900s for the prospectors who searched for silver and gold in that desolate area of California. The authors tell of the lives and relate anecdotes of the famous old-timers. First published in 1965, this reprinted edition is an asset to any library. Paperback, illustrated, 98 pages, \$3.00.



# THE WEST

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**LOST DESERT BONANZAS** by Eugene Conrotto. Brief resumes of lost mine articles printed in back issues of *DESERT* Magazine, by a former editor. Hardcover, 278 pages, \$7.50.

**THE ROCKS BEGIN TO SPEAK** by LaVan Martineau. The author tells how his interest in rock writing led to years of study and how he has learned that many—especially the complex petroglyphs—are historical accounts of actual events. Hardcover, well illustrated, glossary, bibliography, 210 pages, \$8.95.

**THE MAN WHO WALKED THROUGH TIME** by Colin Fletcher. An odyssey of a man who lived simply and in solitude for two months as he hiked through the Grand Canyon. Combining his physical prowess with Thoreau-like observations, the author has written a book of great magnitude. Hardcover, illustrated, 239 pages, \$6.95.

**BACK ROADS OF CALIFORNIA** by Earl Tholander and the Editors of *Sunset Books*. Early stagecoach routes, missions, remote canyons, old prospector cabins, mines, cemeteries, etc., are visited as the author travels and sketches the California Backroads. Through maps and notes, the traveler is invited to get off the freeways and see the rural and country lanes throughout the state. Hardcover, large format, unusually beautiful illustrations, 207 pages, \$8.95.

**RELICS OF THE WHITEMAN** by Marvin and Helen Davis. A logical companion to *Relics of the Redman*, this book brings out a marked difference by showing in its illustrations just how "suddenly modern" the early West became after the arrival of the white man. The difference in artifacts typifies the historical background in each case. The same authors tell how and where to collect relics of these early days, tools needed, and how to display and sell valuable pieces. Paperback, well illustrated in color and b/w, 63 pages, \$3.95.

**TEMALPAKH** by Lowell John Bean and Katherine Siya Saubel. Temalpakh means "from the earth," in Cahuilla, and covers the many uses of plants used for food, medicine, rituals and those used in the manufacturing of baskets, sandals, hunting tools; and plants used for dwellings. Makes for a better understanding of environmental and cultural relationships. Well illustrated, 225 pages, hardcover, \$10.00; paperback, \$6.50.

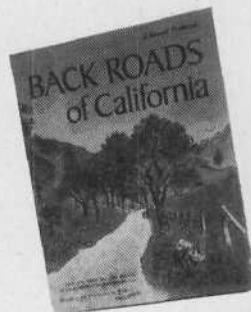
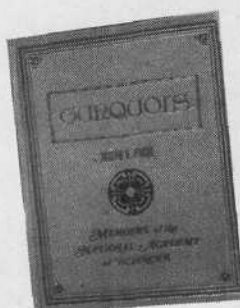
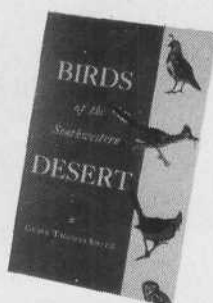
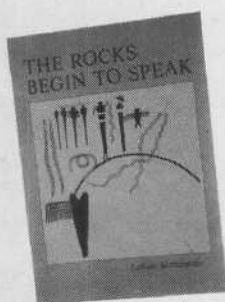
**THE BEAUTIFUL SOUTHWEST** by the Editors of *Sunset books*. A pictorial with a brief text showing modern day activities of cities such as Phoenix, El Paso, Taos, and communities below the Mexican border, and covering the Southwestern states, canyons and deserts. 240 photographs of which 47 are four-color, large format, 223 pages, hardcover, \$10.95.

**BACK ROADS OF CALIFORNIA** by Earl Tholander and the Editors of *Sunset Books*. Early stagecoach routes, missions, remote canyons, old prospector cabins, mines, cemeteries, etc., are visited as the author travels and sketches the California Backroads. Through maps and notes, the traveler is invited to get off the freeways and see the rural and country lanes throughout the state. Hardcover, large format, unusually beautiful illustrations, 207 pages, \$8.95.

**SOUTHERN IDAHO GHOST TOWNS** by Wayne Sparling. 84 ghost towns are described, along with the history and highlights of each. The author has visited these sites by pickup, 4WD and by foot. 95 photographs accompany the text, and maps detail the location of the camps. An excellent reference to add to the libraries of those fascinated by Western history. Paperback, 135 pages, \$3.95.

**DESERT VACATIONS ARE FUN** by Robert Needham. A complete, factual and interesting handbook for the desert camper. Valuable information on weather conditions, desert vehicles, campsites, food and water requirements. Information on desert wildlife, mines, ghost towns, and desert hobbies. Paperback, illustrated, 10 maps, 134 pages, \$3.95.

**HOW TO COLLECT ANTIQUE BOTTLES** by John C. Tibbits. A fascinating insight of early America as seen through the eyes of the medicine companies and their advertising almanacs. Excellent book for avid bottle collectors and those just starting. Also includes chapters on collecting, locations and care of bottles. Heavy, slick paperback, well illus., 118 pages, \$4.00.



**BIRDS OF THE SOUTHWESTERN DESERTS** by Gusse Thomas Smith. Thirty-one of the most commonly sighted birds of the Southwest are described and illustrated in 4-color artist drawings. Heavy paperback, 68 pages, \$3.95.

**MY CANYONLANDS** by Kent Frost. A vivid account of the early exploration of Utah's Canyonlands by the author who spent his entire life exploring America's new national park and who presently runs a guide service through the scenic country. Hardcover, artist illustrations, 160 pages, \$6.95.

**LOST MINES OF ARIZONA** by Harold Weight. Covers the Lost Jabonero, lost mines of the Trigos, Buried Gold of Bicuner and others of southwestern Arizona. Paperback, \$2.00.

**BEACHES OF BAJA** by Walt Wheelock. Beaches on the Pacific side of Lower California are described by the veteran Baja explorer. Unlike California beaches, they are still relatively free of crowds. Paperback, illus., 72 pages, \$1.95.

**A FIELD GUIDE TO WESTERN REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS** by Robert C. Stebbins. A Peterson Field guide. 207 species, 569 illustrations, 185 in full color, 192 maps. The best book of this type. Hardcover, \$5.95.

**BAJA CALIFORNIA** by Choral Pepper. Packed in this comparatively small book is a world of facts about the land, the insects, vegetation, the seashore, the missionaries, vanished missions, lost treasures and strange stories, tall and true, of Baja California. Fascinating reading. Paperback, 126 pages, \$1.95.

**TURQUOIS** by Joseph E. Pogue. [Memoirs of the National Academy of Sciences]. First printed in 1915, *Turquoise* has in its third printing (1973) been updated in many ways. Among them are listed currently-operated Turquoise mines, more color plates. The book is full of incredible results of research and an in-depth study of this fascinating mineral of superficial origin. Hardcover, 175 pages, beautifully illustrated, \$15.00.

**SELDOM SEEN SLIM** by Tom Murray. Profiles and vignettes of the colorful "single blanket jackass prospectors" who lived and died as they looked for gold and silver in Death Valley. Slick paperback, exclusive photos of the old-timers, 65 pages, \$3.00.

**100 DESERT WILDFLOWERS** by Natt Dodge. Each flower is illustrated with a 4-color photograph and described in detail, where found, blooming period, etc. Habitats from sea level to 4,000 feet. Slick paperback, 64 pages, \$2.00.

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**ANASAZI: Ancient People of the Rock**  
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Text by Donald G. Pike

In this moving book, the exceptional talents of David Muench, one of the West's outstanding landscape photographers, and western author Donald G. Pike have been brought together to provide the reader with the unique opportunity to see and understand the Anasazi civilization that existed some 2,000 years ago.

Master photographer David Muench has captured the stark beauty, the drama, and the mystical quality of the ruins of the Anasazi—Navajo for "The Ancient Ones." Just who were the builders of these great stone cities, once the centers of a bustling civilization, now crumbling empty and windswept in the lonely reaches of the American South-

west? Staying but a few centuries, where did they vanish—and why? The cities they built loom like giant question marks—beckoning scientists and intriguing travelers ever since white man discovered the first site.

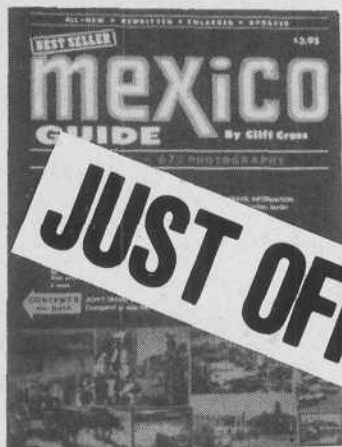
In addition to capturing the ruins and their vast scale and magnificence of the barren landscape from which they rise, David includes closeups of the craftsmanship of these gentle people, and re-creates a feeling of what it might have been to live here so long ago.

Blending with David's superb photography, the fascinating text by historian Donald G. Pike tells what is already known about the Anasazi, and traces the scientific manhunt in which generations of archaeologist have worked to learn more. Gradually, through patience and ingenuity, a shadowy picture of the lost People of the Rock is beginning to emerge.

Frank Waters, in his Foreword of *Anasazi*, has summed up the combined efforts of David Muench and Donald Pike thusly:

"This is an evocative book. The sensitivity of its full-color photographic essays evokes the mystic beauty, the sublime terror, and ever-present mystery of this great nuclear heartland of America. And in proper balance the earthy objectivity of its text outlines the long span of the responsive Anasazi, who have bequeathed to us their heritage of the oldest, largest, and most beautiful monumental ruins in all America."

An outstanding publication, it contains six full-color portfolios (never before reproduced) plus a collection of historic black and white photographs taken by Adam Clark Vroman almost 100 years ago. Hardcover, 192 pages, \$16.95 until December 31, 1974, then \$18.95.



New revised editions of **MEXICO Guide** and **BAJA California Guide** by **Cliff Cross**. All-new, enlarged and updated. **MEXICO Guide** contains 210 maps, 675 photos; **BAJA Guide** includes new **Trans-Peninsula Highway** and gas available in Mexico; 60 maps, 450 photos. \$3.95 each.

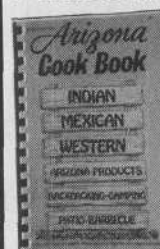


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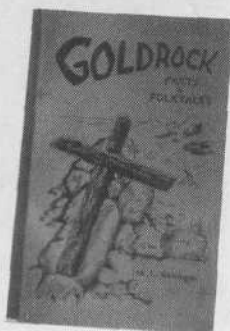
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**GOLDROCK Facts and Folktales**  
By Iva L. Geisinger

A few miles east of the Algodones Sand Dunes juts the Cargo Muchacho Mountains. At the base of these desolate outcroppings are the remains of two mining towns and the essence of a third—the Goldrock district.

"Goldrock. One can but bring to mind huge nuggets of pure gold. The folk-lore origin of the name of its mountains, the tales of lost ledges, veins, and nuggets, along with its real mines once rich with gold—these are the ingredients which have become the romantic aura of a few square miles of sand, rock and hardpan, known as Goldrock."

So states author Iva Geisinger in describing this site on the California Desert of the once bustling mining towns which has been reduced long ago to merely an area containing only the ghosts of yesterday.

Touching on the changes in earth and atmosphere that took place to lure the first human beings to the California deserts; the earliest signs of man's habitation; the Spanish explorers; Indian uprisings; and the introduction of roads and railroads in the area, Iva then brings us the facts and legends of the ghost towns, lost mines and personalities of the Goldrock area.

Brief, but interesting, are recounts of the Lost Sullivan, Lost Mule Shoe Gold, Black Butte Gold, California's Lost Dutchman, and Algodones Gold.

Iva brings us up to date with the coming of General Patton and his troops to the Goldrock area, and an interesting history of the Walker family who homesteaded there and still maintain the Gold Rock Ranch.

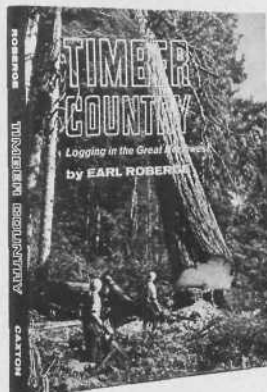
Paperback, 65 pages, illustrated, \$2.25.

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## Now - The Great Adventure In Logging

### TIMBER COUNTRY

by  
Earl Roberge



11 1/4" x 14 1/2"

208 Pages

136 Full-color Photographs

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Spring 1974

Here, at last, is a beautiful, big, informative book on the controversial logging industry of the Great Northwest: a book that shows logging as it is, by an author with first hand observation and information on the subject. Beautifully illustrated with 136 full color photographs, it is the first comprehensive report on a dynamic industry that is basic to the economy and ecology of the Northwest and of the nation.

In order to factually present his story, Earl Roberge has traveled and worked with loggers and logging crews, operating under all possible conditions for many months. Over a year has been spent in research and photography to prepare this work.

*bx*

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## Back in Print



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# Dinosaur

**Desert's Utah Editor, F. A. Barnes, comes up with an exclusive as he describes new-found tracks of animals discovered in Southeastern Utah!**

*Lin Ottinger examines a row of pterosaur tracks at his second find of these rare impressions. The continuous stride pattern of these tracks make them very valuable to scientists because they reveal a great deal about the animal's behavior.*

THE DINOSAUR HUNTING in southeastern Utah and vicinity is great these days!

Dinosaurs—the “terrible lizards” of eras long past—dominated this planet for some 120 million years. Mankind has only been around a relatively short time, and missed sharing this world with the giant lizards by tens of millions of years.

Yet, even so, dinosaur hunting within the arid redrock hinterlands of southeastern Utah and southwestern Colorado has been highly successful recently—for

those who are satisfied to find something less than a whole, living beast.

Having been around for such a long time, dinosaurs and their reptilian relatives have left plenty of evidence of their past existence in the form of fossilized bones, “gizzard stones” and foot tracks in the sands of time. During the eras when dinosaurs were living, from the late Paleozoic through most of the Mesozoic Era, changing climates and widely differing environments created many types of dinosaurs and their lesser relatives, including the very first flying vertebrates, the pterosaurs or “pterodactyls.”

Thus, dinosaur traces are left in geologic strata representing every type of environment from vast deserts, through temperate zone river-lake country, to tropical swamplands. The big problem with hunting these traces of earlier life is that present-day plantlife tends to cover most of the earth's land surfaces. One exception to this is, of course, in desert regions. There, the bare bones of old Mother Earth are exposed for inspection, and in southeastern Utah this inspection has been quite fruitful.

Earlier finds of dinosaur bones and other petrified remains have been studied, protected and well publicized. The immense fossil beds near Vernal, Utah, have been incorporated into Dinosaur National Monument. Another site, the Cleveland-Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry of southcentral Utah, is not so widely known but is protected and being developed for study. There are a number of other lesser sites of fossilized bone or foot tracks in nearby regions of southern Utah, northern Arizona and western Colorado.

Five recent discoveries, however, have renewed both scientific and public interest in the gentle art of dinosaur hunting. Four of these were made within a few miles of the southeastern Utah town of Moab, in Canyonlands country. The fifth was in nearby southwestern Colorado. Three of the discoveries are unique and of considerable scientific

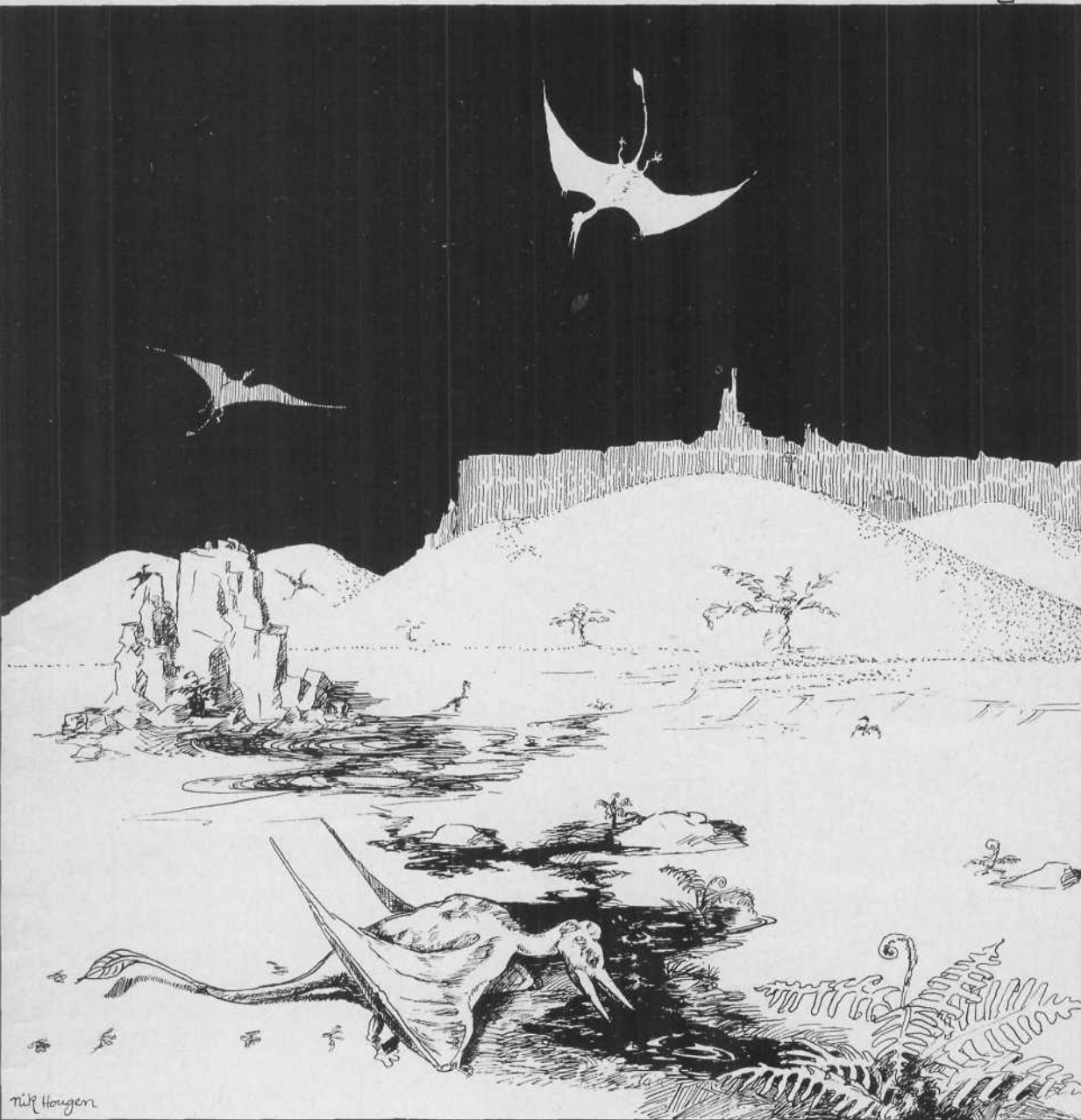




# Hunting

by  
F. A. BARNES

*This artist's reconstruction of the sites where the pterosaur tracks were found, at the time when the tracks were being made, was based upon all available scientific evidence to date. Geologists claim that the region resembled the Sahara Desert during the time when the Navajo Sandstone was being laid down, with tiny oases, sparse vegetation and "playas" or desert drywashes that sometimes contained rain runoff.*



value. In capsule form, here are the stories of all five finds:

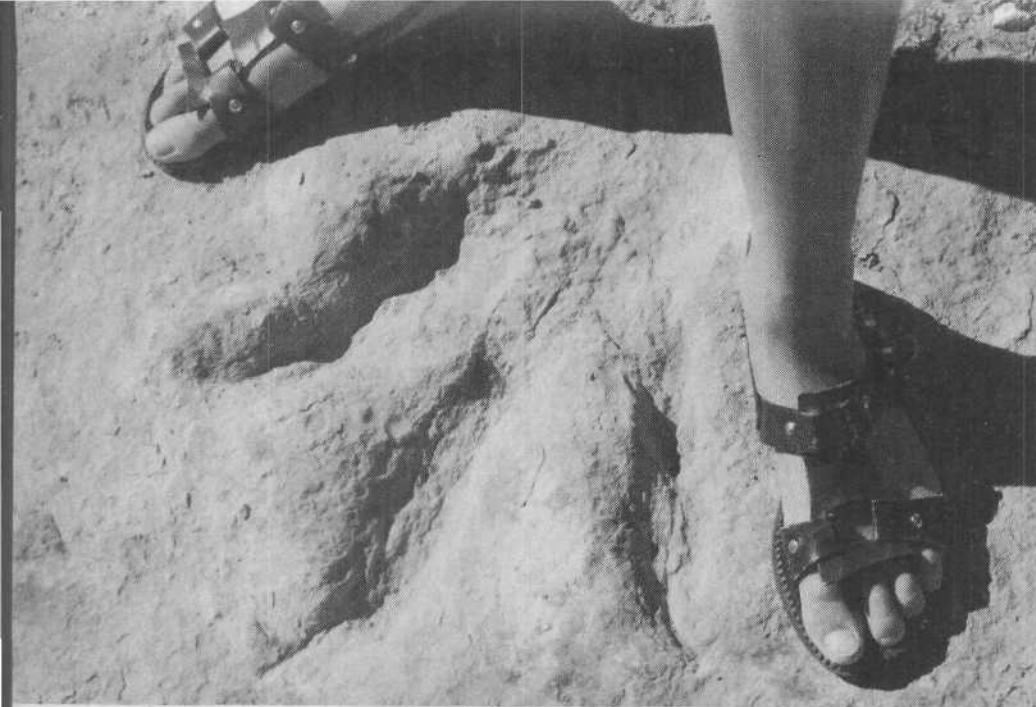
**LITTLE TRACKS.** Several years ago, Lin Ottinger, a back country guide, discovered two big slabs of rock and several smaller ones that were simply covered with beautifully preserved foot tracks of several types of small animals. The big slabs had been exposed to weathering for such a long time that they were jet black with desert varnish.

It was some time before Lin Ottinger

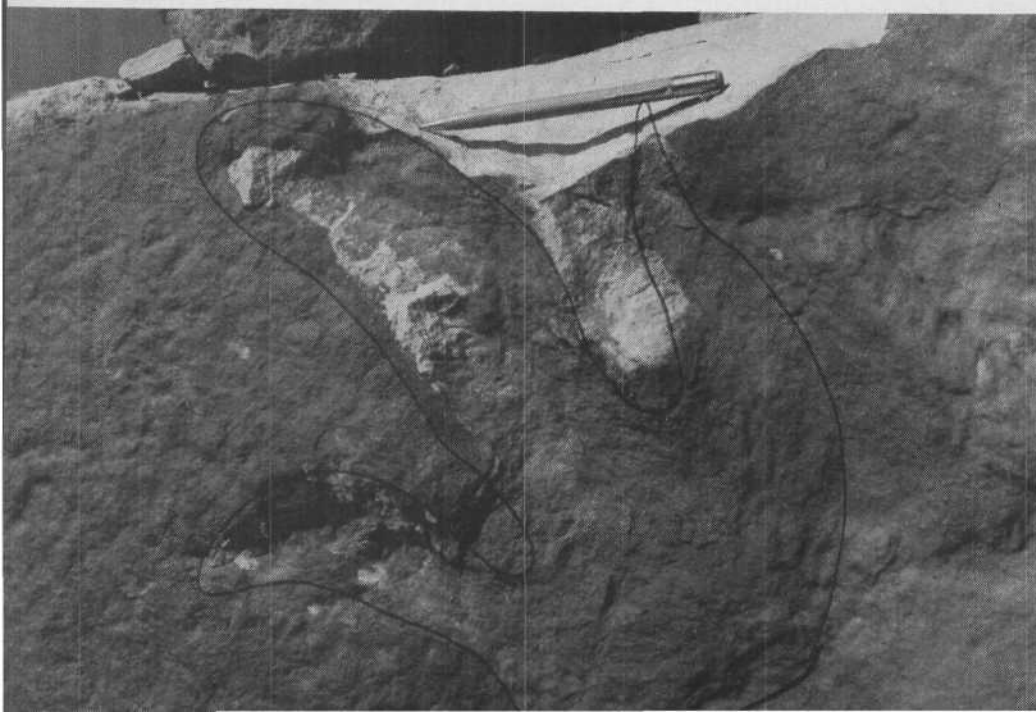
could get a paleontologist to take a serious look at his find. When one finally visited the site, Dr. Samuel P. Welles, of the University of California at Berkeley, the value of the site was quickly established. Although several species of long extinct animals had left their tracks in this sandstone, by far the most important were the tracks of the flying reptiles, or pterosaurs.

A preliminary investigation by Dr. Welles and scientists from the Univer-

sity of Utah quickly established the novelty of these tracks. First, there was only one other known site of pterosaur tracks in the entire world, and that was only a few tracks in much more recent geologic strata. Second, the new find was in Navajo Sandstone, and there was only one other known site of tracks in this type of rock. That was in nearby western Colorado. What made this so strange is that it indicates that some form of flying reptile was thriving in the midst of what



*Above: Feet help give scale to the dinosaur tracks found at the first site. Left: The first site containing pterosaur tracks is indicated here by its discoverer, Lin Ottinger. The tiny tracks are in desert varnish darkened sandstone. The slabs of rock on which the tracks appear have slid down the gully from their original position. Below: A fairly distinct track at the Epmeier find is shown here close up with a pencil for scale. The three-toed track is outlined for clear viewing.*



was then a vast Sahara-like desert.

Third, because of the sheer antiquity of the rock in which the tracks were found, they represented the earliest known traces of flying vertebrates on the planet, as well as an entire species never before encountered. The estimated age of the tracks is 170 million years.

Fourth, the small size of the tracks indicated that the creature was much smaller than later species whose fossilized remains have been found. The wing spans of larger pterosaurs range from 10 to 30 feet, but Dr. Welles estimated the span of the new species at between 18 and 30 inches, making it a veritable "sparrow" among known species of flying reptiles.

Scientists are further excited about other aspects of the tracks, such as the fact that sequences of steps occur, and that the tracks give clues to the behavior and walking methods used by these earliest of flying reptiles. For example, the tracks show a four-footed gait, while earlier conjectures had favored a two-footed stride. Clues as to the diet of pterosaurs also exist at the site. Previously, scientists considered flying reptiles to be largely fish eaters, but those at the new site were apparently eating a species of mudworm.

Further scientific investigation of this remarkable find is pending removal of the great slabs of rock that contain the tracks to the University of Utah for careful study. After this, the original rocks may be placed on public display, either at the university or in Moab.

**BIG TRACKS.** In mid-1970, this writer discovered a series of dinosaur tracks that a University of Utah scientist claimed were probably the "best in the state." The tracks were found in the Kayenta Formation, freshwater sediments laid down early in the age of dinosaurs, some 175 million years ago.

The tracks, which varied in length from nine to fifteen inches, were three-toed and, according to the scientist who investigated them, probably made by a predecessor of the great flesh-eating dinosaurs that dominated animal life in the Utah region 45 million years later.

Preliminary findings about the well-defined tracks indicated that the dinosaurs that made them walked erect on two feet, held their long, slender tails up as they walked or ran, had small armlike forelimbs, and were carnivores, probab-



ly preying upon other animals around the edge of a shallow lake. The tracks found were originally made in mud at the edge of such a lake.

Due to budget limitations, University of Utah scientists have made no further plans to study this interesting site, but they have offered to cooperate with local authorities in protection and development of the site for public viewing. The matter now lies in the hands of the Bureau of Land Management, which administers the land on which the tracks were discovered.

**MORE BIG TRACKS.** During the winter of 1970-1971, a large rock slide occurred beside the Colorado River a few miles down from Moab Valley. The slide started when a flat block of rock, some six by twenty-four feet in size, lost support and tilted 90 degrees, dumping many tons of overhead rock into the gulley below.

In March of 1971, Leon Epmeier, of Moab, discovered the fresh slide, climbed up for a close look at the big slab of sandstone that had tilted and discovered it to be covered with dinosaur footprints. The tracks were not as numerous and distinct as those in the nearby find a year earlier, but were nonetheless interesting.

They also had the advantage of being clearly visible from a paved road, Utah 279, and could thus be viewed by visitors to the area. The site was already marked to indicate a rock from the same layer that had been exposed much earlier. This rock had two or three small tracks on it, and a panel of Indian petroglyphs were visible on a vertical stone wall behind the rock. Thus, the new exposure of dinosaur tracks is both easy to find and easy to reach for a closer look.

The tracks discovered by Leon Epmeier were also in the Kayenta Formation, and were probably made on another stretch of shore around the same lake as the other local site. And, doubtless, there are still other tracks in the general vicinity as yet unexposed, or exposed but still undiscovered.

**STILL MORE LITTLE TRACKS.** Once Lin Ottinger's first discovery of pterosaur tracks was scientifically identified, he then set out to find more, hoping to make a further contribution to the study of early flying reptiles and other contemporary animal life.

*Continued on Page 40*



*A close look at the pterosaur and other tracks at the first find reveals a complex pattern of stride made by several species of small animals.*

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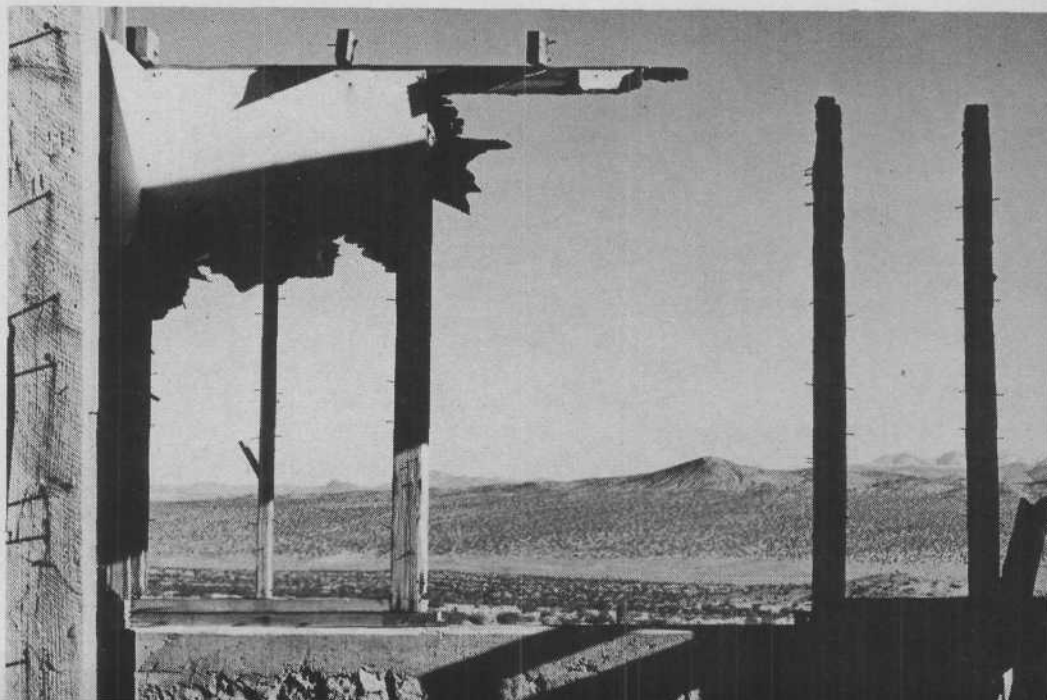
# THE MINES OF RAND

by HOWARD NEAL

**The Rand Mining District is approximately 150 miles north of Los Angeles on U.S. 395. With its sister communities of Randsburg, Johannesburg, Red Mountain and Atolia it has been one of the richest gold, silver, and tungsten producing areas in the history of California.**

*One of the oldest buildings in Randsburg, Santa Barbara Church is still being used for Catholic services. Many of the buildings along Butte Avenue, Randsburg's main street, date from the 1890s and early 1900s.*

*Abandoned house in the Summit Mountains. In the spring of 1895 Frederic Mooers, John Singleton, and Charles Burcham were mining at Summit Dry Diggings, in the Summit Mountains, six miles north of Rand Mountain*





*The Yellow Aster head frame.  
Gold ore was hauled from  
more than six miles of tunnels,  
on six levels,  
as much as 600 feet underground.  
More than 20 million dollars  
in gold was extracted  
from the Yellow Aster  
between 1895 and 1942.*

IN THE northern Mojave Desert, April can be a beautiful month. The nights are cool, and the days are pleasantly warm. The land can be covered with a profusion of desert flowers. They say that the desert had this beauty in April of 1895, but it was not obvious to the several dozen miners at a place called Summit Dry Diggings.

Summit Dry Diggings was the latest in a series of several small gold strikes in the El Paso Mountains, and nearby, that had taken place in the early 1890s. Even the gold discovery at Goler Canyon, largest of the El Paso finds, had been small in contrast with the earlier bonanzas at Coso, Cerro Gordo, and Panamint, to the north.

The Summit District was located in the Summit Mountains, which are an eastern extension of the El Pasos, about 50 miles northeast of the town of Mojave. There was no water. To get a few flakes of gold, dry placer mining was employed. The work was hard, dirty and unproductive. Summit was a "poor man's camp."

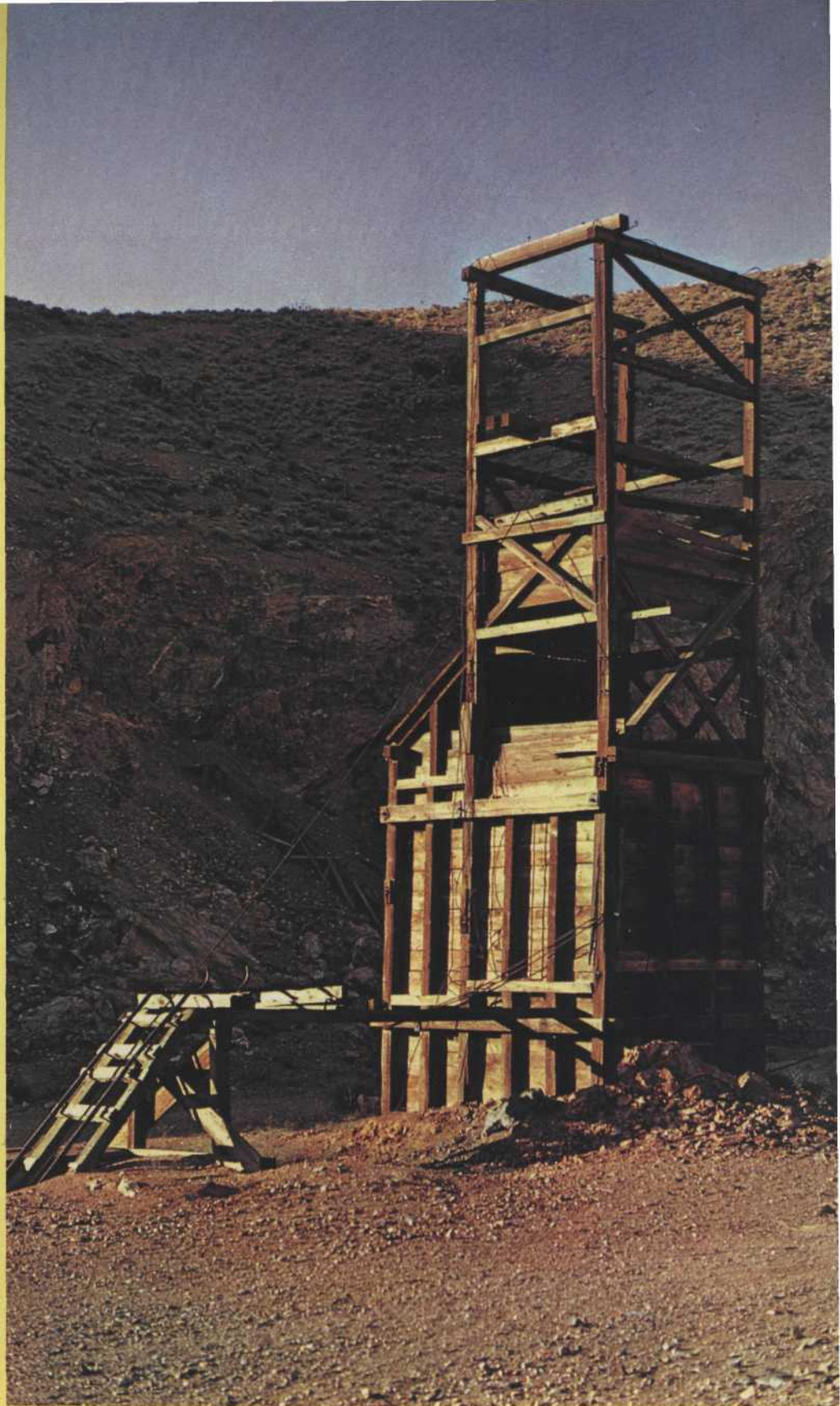
Three of these "poor men" were Frederic Mooers, John Singleton and Charles Burcham.

Frederic Mooers had apparently worked long enough for an eastern newspaper to call himself a journalist. John Sin-

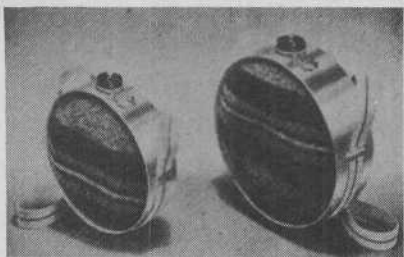
gleton had been a carpenter. Charles Burcham was an ex-cattleman. Each had abandoned his profession in order to strike out into the desert after his "pot of gold at the end of the rainbow."

None had found his bonanza. All three were ready to "call it quits," and go

home, in mid-April of 1895. Together, they decided to make one last try. They would spend a few days prospecting in the low, unnamed mountains to the south of the Summit diggings (where Mooers had seen a little "color" the year before) and then head for home.







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The General Store and Post Office are two of the few remaining full time businesses in Randsburg. Both buildings were built around the turn of the century.

It would be an understatement to say that the "one last try" was a success. On April 25, 1895 the trio discovered what would become one of the richest mining areas in the history of the West.

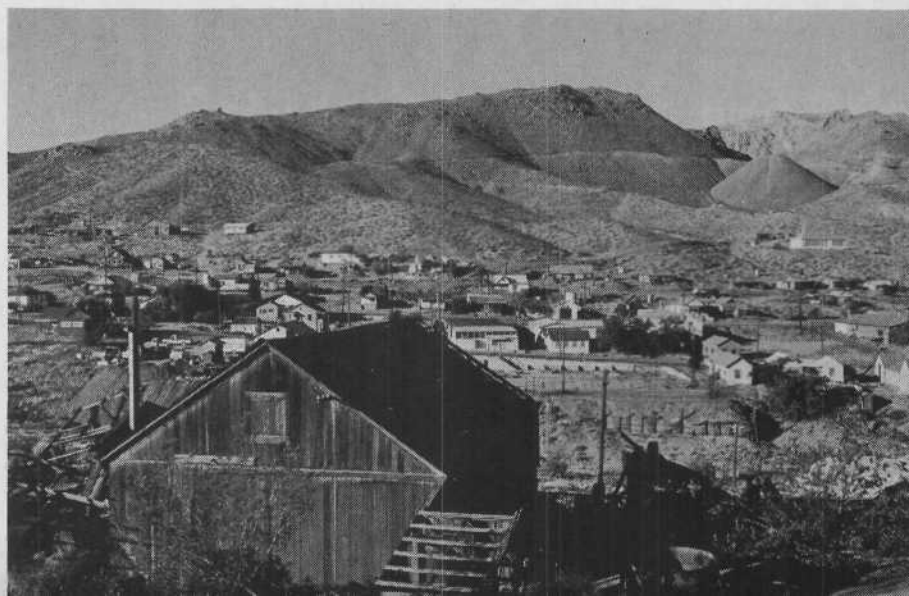
Some say it was Mooers who made the initial find. Others say it was Singleton. It does not matter. High on the side of what was soon to be named Rand Mountain, the source of Mooers' "color" was discovered. Bonanza! Rand Mine was staked, claimed and recorded. The three "poor men" were on their way to becoming millionaires.

Even after the discovery, the path to success was not easy. One of those who had earlier been with Mooers when he had spotted "color," claimed an interest. Soon after the discovery, Singleton

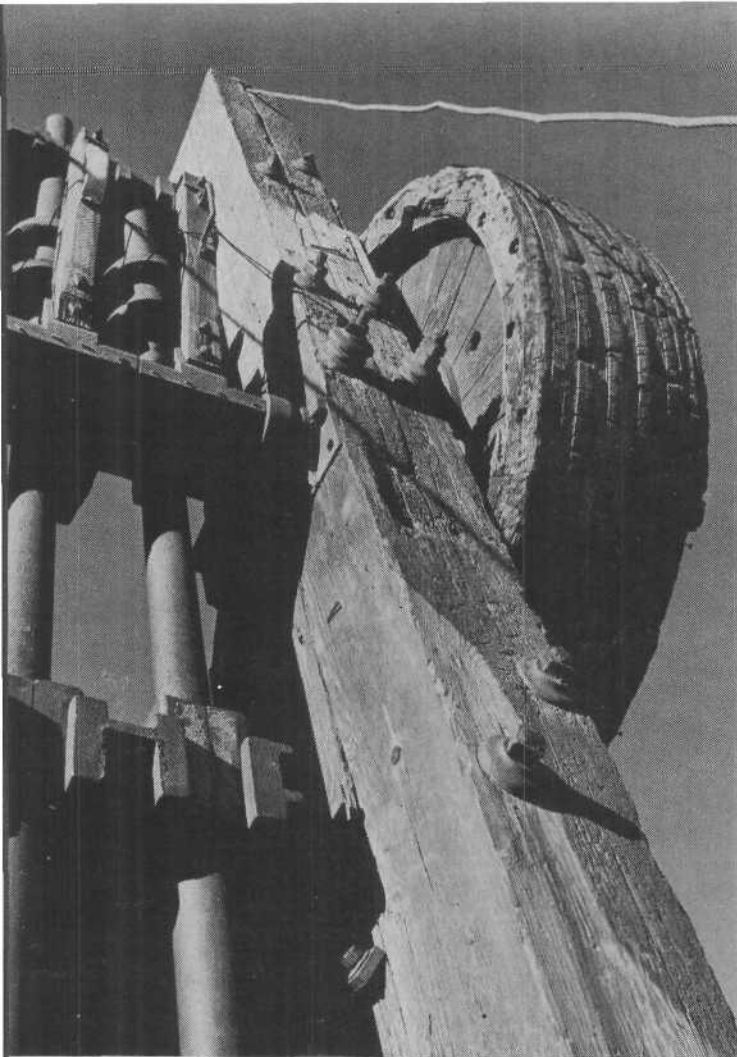
and Mooers agreed to sell the claim to a promoter, only to be dissuaded by Burcham and his strong-willed wife, Dr. Rose Burcham (a San Bernardino physician who had "grubstaked" her husband). Lawsuits were plentiful, but they were settled and the mine was to produce more than 20 million dollars for its discoverers. Mooers, Singleton and Burcham were three of very few prospectors who "hung on" to their original claim.

They named their mine "Rand." When others followed into the canyon at the foot of the mountain, they named it Rand Camp. Naming the area after the famous mining district in South Africa seems, now, to have been a prophetic prediction of things to come. Within months, though, the mine was to be re-

The mining town of Randsburg grew to a population of more than 3,000 by the year 1900. There were many mines in the surrounding hills, including the Little Butte.







*The stamp mill, now on display at the Desert Museum [open weekends] at Randsburg, was once used at the Baltic Mine. A stamp mill crushes ore so that gold and other metals can be extracted. The building on Rand Mountain, that once housed the Yellow Aster Stamp Mill, was destroyed by vandals in 1970.*

named the Yellow Aster, because stock promoters were improperly exploiting the name "Rand." Rand Camp was also renamed. It became Randsburg because it was too large to be properly called a "camp."

More gold was discovered in surrounding hills and as far as five miles from the initial strike. A gold rush was on. Randsburg flourished. Permanent buildings were built, but were destroyed in three major fires, and then rebuilt. The town had its hotels, saloons, dance halls and even a theater. It added a school and a post office, and the population mushroomed to more than 3000 before the turn of the century.

Randsburg even had a railroad. Almost, anyway. The line never quite made it all of the way. The Randsburg Railway traversed 28 miles from a junction with the Santa Fe at Kramer Junction to within one mile of the mining community. The town of Johannesburg, just over the hill and down the grade from Randsburg, was laid out as a "proper townsite" in 1897, and was the final terminus for the railroad.

By the year 1900, there were two communities blossoming on the desert. Randsburg was a thriving mining center. "Joburg" was the family town and transportation terminal, a mile away. The future looked bright as the population climbed. But, gold ore has a bad habit of pinching out, and desert mining communities have an equally bad habit of reverting to sagebrush when the ore disappears. Panamint City, the "Comstock of California," reached a population of more than 5000, yet became a ghost town within four years. The gold mines at Randsburg did close, yet the town has not become a ghost.

Randsburg has survived, in a sense, because the ore really did not run out. At least it lasted long enough, in one form or another, for the various communities in the mining district to take root.

In 1904, when it might be expected that Randsburg would be starting its decline, it was discovered that an area a few miles to the south held one of the largest bodies of tungsten ore in North America. The small town of Atolia was

*Continued on Page 34*



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# NEAREST FARAWAY PLACE

by DIANE THOMAS

**Here's a get-away-from-it-all place where the living is easy. Not, perhaps, the usual type of Desert article, but then it's an unusual spot!**

*Boy making baskets on the road to Estero Beach.*



LOTS OF hotels advertise "private beach" in their folders; but how many advertise "your own private bay" as part of their attractions? And that's not just for hotel guests, but for those vacationers who come in mobile homes, with campers or trailers, or who want to rent a motel room with kitchen facilities.

The folders are enough to make you throw a few essentials into a suitcase, grab your checkbook, tuck a Spanish dictionary in your pocket and head for Estero Beach, Baja California. And the nicest part about the whole entry into the Baja Peninsula, is that no tourist permit is required for a 72-hour visit, and no car papers need to be filled out. Only if you plan to drive more than 10 miles south of Ensenada do you need a permit, and Estero Beach is only six miles south; so drive right on down with no border formalities at Tijuana.

If you have a recreation vehicle, you can rent a space with all utilities for \$3 a day up to four persons. Over that, the charge is 75 cents additional a person. And where else can you step out of your camper and into a boat (either yours or one you rent) to fish in your own bay? It's not unusual for 40-pound white bass to be caught in the calm waters. Other fish include corvina, spot fin croaker, ocean perch and halibut. If you're the type who isn't satisfied with anything other than a four-hour tussle with sport fish, then drive back the six miles to Ensenada; the hotel will make all arrangements for your day's outing, and



you could come home with a sailfish or marlin.

Besides the RV spaces, the resort has a deceptively designed hotel. Inside its ultra-modest exterior beats a heart of pure luxury. Huge rooms have mirrored walls, elegant plumbing, beautiful hand-carved furniture, deep shag rugs. All rooms lead out to a long balcony overlooking the bay, privately divided into personal areas.

The evening cocktails are a BYOJ proposition, though, because the owner, Senor Novello, wants Estero Beach to be a family center. There is no bar on the premises. Back six miles to Ensenada if you forgot your supplies.

There's a fine restaurant on the grounds. Although it is small and the meal hours are untypically early, the meals are delicious. Fresh seafood, steaks and Mexican specialties are featured, with prices as modest as the building.

If you're on a budget vacation, then taking your own RV will be the best answer. Rates at the hotel are about the same as any good motel in season. For two people, the rooms with double bed run from \$10 to \$16, depending on location, while two-bedded rooms go up to \$17. That must be a magic number, because the same price applies to two people in a twin-bedded room, as well as two-bedded suites that sleep four!





*Every hotel balcony  
has an uninterrupted view.*

silk ties from Paris, underwater watches from Switzerland and men's sweaters from Scotland.

Eventually, there will be a fine marina as part of the complex, but the Alaskan earthquake of 1964 sent tidal waves through the middle of Senor Novello's plans. At present, the long canals are cut by the water, and not in the areas planned. So the filling and retrenching goes on, and at present there is no permanent anchorage for small boats; they must be launched and beached each day.

A fine sand beach fronts the entire resort, and bathing is perfectly safe for small children. Many species of waterbirds feed on the tidal flats to one side of the hotel, so bring along your telephoto lens and camera.

Apartments with kitchen facilities run from \$13 to \$18, again depending on the number of people and beds. Suites start at \$22 and cots are available for children in your room.

Another little extra in the room is bottled water; so there's no excuse for brushing your teeth with ginger ale!

During the top tourist months (March 15 to September 30), the resort is booked well ahead, so a phone call saves you being disappointed. Or have your travel club book for you.

There are lots of things to do in this self-contained resort. There are tennis courts, a recreation hall with coin-operated games, pool and ping-pong tables, a children's playground and excellent water skiing on the curving bay.

There is also a most attractive shopping center designed to part you from any traveler's checks you may have stashed away for emergencies. One shop is exclusively Mexican, and the items found here are selected to be representative of the better crafts of Mexico. Clothing, wrought iron, glass, embroideries and jewelry are some of the items on display. The other shop is the type you would find in a free port air terminal. Gifts from around the world are featured. Fortunately for generous husbands, the manager keeps rather short hours, a monetary blessing that turns out to be frustrating when the window is full of

wanders through the towns, up desolate mountains and across ravines, and is a lot more scenic.

Many tourists who get no farther than Ensenada with its American chain motels (most of which either face the noisy street or overlook the junkyards), come back never knowing how close they were to a quiet vacation with all the fun and none of the fuss. You have to look for Estero Beach. The last mile and a half is down an all-weather road that leads away from the Ensenada-La Paz highway to the bay. The entrance is marked with a freshly painted sign, just past the military airport which is four miles south of Ensenada. Lining the last mile before you reach the hill leading down to the resort are little shelters where pottery is decorated and straw baskets are woven and the workers willingly pose for photographs.

If vacation time permits, go five miles beyond the Estero Beach turnoff and follow the road to the right marked "La Bufadora." Fifteen miles down the paved highway, which winds high up on the ocean cliffs, is one of the largest blowholes in the world. Water shoots 70 feet into the air when the surf hits the rock tube, and an eternal rainbow is present on sunny days.

Watch out for loose burros, children and chickens. And, oh yes, be sure to get Mexican car insurance before you cross the border. □

The mild climate—ranging from 70 to 80 degrees the year round—draws a lot of permanent mobile home owners. Unlike the main part of Mexico, there is no requirement in Baja California that makes people report to the American side every six months. One man has lived there 20 years and has only been back once to see his friends in Southern California. That was enough, he said; he didn't like the freeway traffic.

If you bring down a mobile home to live in, you may build a cabana. The government doesn't tax the home, but it does levy a \$24 tax on your cabana. The spaces are not regimented in size or location. You may have as much space as you care to rent. One cabana on a double-wide has two barbecue pits and a roomy dance floor.

People living in the San Diego area frequently drive down to Estero Beach for dinner. The new toll road makes the 73-mile trip a breeze. If you want to make the drive more interesting, you can take the old road down and return on the toll road. The toll road follows the water, costs under \$4, and avoids all the small towns that dot the coastline; the old road

*La Bufadora, one of the world's  
largest blowholes, sprays 70 feet into  
the air a short drive from  
Estero Beach.*





# Mono's Golden Ghosts

by MARY FRANCES STRONG

RISING ABRUPTLY from the northern shore of Mono Lake, the Bodie Hills lie wedged against California's might Sierra-Nevadas and form a natural barrier between Mono and Bridgeport Valleys. These desolate, red-brown hills seem intruders in a scenic region of magnificent mountains, glacial valleys, sparkling lakes and volcanic craters. With almost more beauty to behold than can be assimilated, few travelers notice the Bodie Hills, except for the spectacular view from 8000-foot Conway Summit, or during a side-trip to the famous old mining camp of Bodie—now a State Park. Most



vacationers have yet to discover Mono's Golden Ghosts—Dogtown and Mono-ville.

The Bodie Hills have an important place in California's early history, aside from well-known Bodie. This land has known the tread of several men whose explorations literally "opened up the West"—Jedediah Strong Smith, John C. Fremont and Kit Carson. A little known fact of great significance is the Bodie Hills were the site of the "First gold rush east of the Sierras." Even more amazing, they may have been the site of the first gold discovery in California. Jedediah Smith found the precious metal on their southern slopes in about 1822! He took his samples to Salt Lake City,

but a "rush" into the then unknown territory didn't occur.

California had yet to become a state, undergo the gold rush of 1849 and in 1852, have Lt. Treadwell Moore find gold in the same locale as Smith, before miners would leave the Mother Lode to explore the eastern side of the Sierras. Upon hearing of Moore's discovery, miner Lee Vining, already disenchanted with conditions in the Mother Lode, decided the new area might offer greater opportunity. He assembled a small party and hired an Indian guide to take them across the Sierras. However, they didn't reach the Bodie Hills.

Their route led over a natural pass in the mountains, then followed a precipi-





Opposite page, top left: Paul Okamoto acts as caretaker of several claims including his own in Rattlesnake Gulch. He is a happy escapee from the big city and a newcomer to the "Mono Diggings." Top Right: The last original building remaining at Monoville is the former grocery store. Located within close proximity to a spring, a practical, as well as picturesque setting was selected. Left: Lying less than one-quarter mile from Highway 395 [in background], Dogtown's stone ruins and placer tailings can easily be overlooked by speeding motorists. Arrow indicates Historical Marker along the highway. Above left: "Oldtimer" George Totland and his inseparable companion, Casey, work the gold-bearing strata at the Yellow Beans Mine by the simple but efficient method of sluicing. Above right: Dog Creek and adjacent ground was first placered by Cord Norst and his Indian wife, Mary, around 1857. Right: George Totland and the author discuss mining techniques on far side of tailings pond at the Yellow Beans Mine. The lower sluice catches any fine gold that upper one has missed. Note canvas "pipe" snaking down gulch. It brings water from spring above George's cabin whose roof is barely visible above the diggings [right center]. Photos by Jerry Strong



tous canyon down their eastern escarpment. Enamored by the rushing stream and lush meadows, Vining elected to settle where there was feed for livestock, as well as gold. Today, the canyon (leading to Tioga Pass) and the town at its base are named in his honor.

Just when Cord Norst and his wife, Mary (reportedly a beautiful Indian girl) found one of the Golden Ghosts is uncertain. In 1857, they were well settled on a stream Norst had named Dog Creek. Comfortably housed in a dugout, their days were profitably spent panning and placering gold. Beaver and trout shared the stream and wild game was plentiful. The Norsts had found their own special paradise, but the tranquility of their Uto-

pia was not due to last.

Word of successful gold ventures always manages to reach the outside world. In this case, the news fell on listening ears in Salt Lake City. By 1859, nearly 100 miners had come to work the gold-bearing gravels and "Dogtown" had been born. The town was a conglomeration of dugouts, rock huts and one important building—the Loose Grocery and Liquor Store. It was the center of Dogtown's recreational activities. From all accounts, there were some wild celebrations held on Saturday nights and special holidays. Indirectly, from one of the latter, July 4, 1859, the second of the Golden Ghosts was discovered—Monoville.

Located six miles southeast of Dogtown and separated by ridges reaching 8500 feet, the story of Monoville's discovery seems a bit incongruous. Perhaps the stalwart men of the early days were far more rugged than their 20th Century counterparts. It would seem that though filled with booze to the point of needing "rest," they could scale the hills like mountain goats. In any case, the story is chronicled many times and it is not my intent to doubt it. However, I cannot help my reservations concerning the facts that follow.

Vast amounts of whiskey were swilled during Dogtown's Fourth of July celebration. One miner, known as Chris, evidently felt the need of "fresh air and

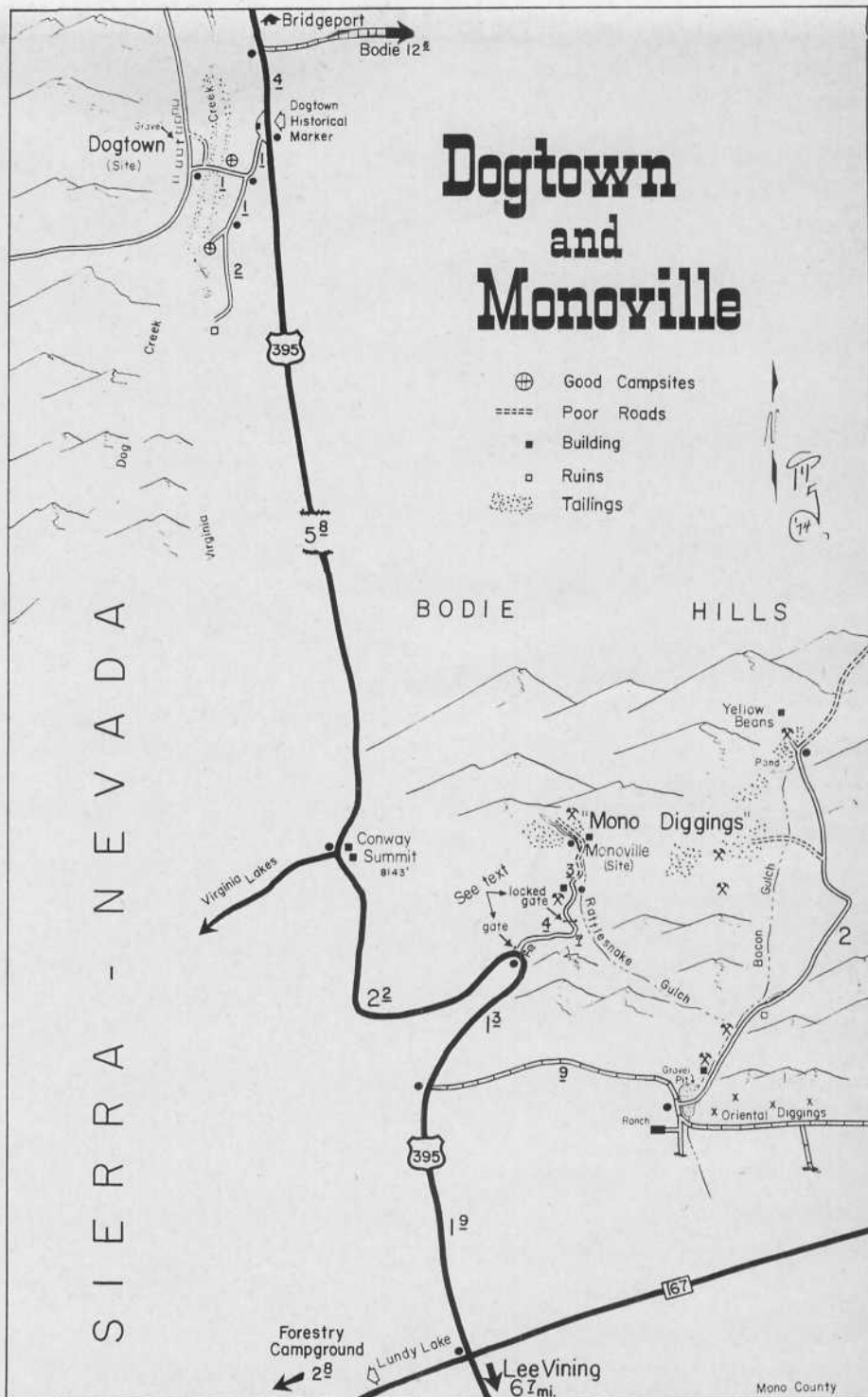
rest." Looking for a place to do the latter, he wandered (probably staggered would be more descriptive) up and over the mountains to a point six miles south. Here, while lying on the ground, he picked up a handful of soil and couldn't believe what he saw—considerable gold! Rushing back to the party, he showed the still-celebrating miners his find, but they thought he was just "pulling their leg." Finally, one miner showed interest and then everyone decided to go to the site with Chris. The discovery of the Mono Diggings was made.

While Chris located the first claim, he seems to have then disappeared from the scene. A "rush" was on when the Dogtowners all moved to the new strike. They were followed by a stampede of goldseekers from the Mother Lode who had heard gold lay on the surface and panning brought at least \$100 a day. Nearly a thousand men came to the diggings and the resultant settlement, strung over the hills and gulches, was named Monoville. Housing consisted mainly of primitive dugouts and log cabins. A few businesses and many saloons supplied the town's needs.

Water was scarce but, by pooling work and funds, the men dug a ditch from Virginia Creek to Monoville. Hydraulic and rocker operations were soon working full blast. However, as summer waned, so did the enthusiasm. The diggings had not proved as rich as expected, living conditions were very poor and the inclement fall weather in this high country warned of things to come. All but about 150 people headed for other parts.

The remaining residents were destined to have their faith and courage tested when one of the worst winters in many years hit the region. A November storm dropped five feet of snow at Monoville, leaving it completely isolated from the outside world. All trails lay under deep drifts and there was little possibility of its melting before spring. Supplies were very low in the mining camp and the trapped families would not be able to survive until a thaw.

With the nearest source of supply 100 miles north at Genoa in Carson Valley, the outlook seemed bleak. Then, several of the most able-bodied men volunteered to attempt the trip on homemade snowshoes. Succeed they did: and, even more remarkable, they made the round trip in two weeks. Without the precious sup-



plies, the fate of Monoville's population could have been one of the most tragic events in California's history.

Mining camps have precarious lives and Monoville was no exception. After only a year of existence, there was a mass exodus of residents when the great silver strike was made at Aurora in August of 1860. Most of the frame buildings were quickly dismantled and hauled to the new camp.

In less than five years, Dogtown and Monoville had risen and fallen. A considerable amount of gold had been taken

out of the diggings—probably several million dollars in all. The most productive claim was at Monoville. Known as the "Sinnamon Cut," it yielded \$50,000 in gold.

Cord and Mary Norst, along with a few others, had stayed on at Dogtown and for many years they profitably worked the placer ground. Mining also continued on a small scale at the Mono Diggings. You might say they were "bacon and beans" camps.

Our desire to visit the Golden Ghosts had been of long-standing and late Octo-



ber 1973 found us at Dogtown. All was quiet on Dog Creek where the passing century has not been too unkind. Ugly mounds of tailings remain, but many have been so overgrown with brush they meld into the landscape. West of the creek, along the base of the hill, lay the remains of the town. The ruins of seven rock dwellings and a well-marked gravesite were almost hidden by shoulder-high rabbitbrush and great basin sage.

Browsing around and examining the ruins, we became aware of the strength and courage of our ancestors, as well as their dedication to the dream of golden wealth. The tiny dwellings barely held a man, his bed and stove. "Cabin fever" must have been prevalent during the long winter months. No doubt letting off steam at the local saloon kept many of the miners going.

Monoville is gone, but the diggings live on. They seem to be divided into three areas—Rattlesnake Gulch, Bacon Gulch and the Oriental Diggings. Except for the latter, almost the entire area is under claim.

Rattlesnake Gulch was our first objective in the hope "someone would be home." Luck was with us. Paul Okamoto, caretaker for the Cirrus Mining Company, was not only home, but very friendly and helpful. With permission granted to wander around, we drove up the canyon to photograph Monoville's remaining building—the old grocery store. In good repair, this rock cabin now serves as field quarters for Pat Kelly of Lee Vining, the mine company owner.

Upper Rattlesnake Gulch is private property and a locked gate bars en-

trance. In fact, except during hunting season, a gate is closed across the road leading from the highway. See map.

Bacon Gulch is another story. A good dirt road leads high into the hills as far as the Yellow Beans Mine. Beyond is four-wheel-drive country. There are several claims along the lower end of the gulch and two miles above, a "canyon of tailings" scars the landscape.

Our visit to Bacon Gulch was mainly to meet George Totland, 73 years young and the "Mono Diggings" only old-timer. George and his dog, Casey, prov-

ed to be the highlight of our journey to see Mono's Golden Ghosts.

George owns the Yellow Beans Mine. "Only one like it in the diggings," he proudly told us. "This was a 'half-an-ounce' camp, but not the Yellow Beans," he continued. Born in Bergen, Norway, George went into the mines there at the age of 10. He was an experienced miner when he came to the United States in 1923 and he has been mining in the Mono area for nearly 40 years. Hale and hearty, with the deft movements of long experience, George

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works his claims daily except during the snow season when he spends a little time in Lee Vining.

"Originally, there was a mill here with bunker and screening plant," George explained, pointing to a site near the tailings pond. "There is a half-million yards of good pay dirt, but heavy equipment is needed to get the gold." He paused, then continued, "I am planning to sell out. It is a job for a younger man."

George is currently hand-working the gold-bearing strata. "There is gold all through this bank," he told us, "but I am after the coarser material at the bottom." He uses a simple, but effective method. A ditch has been dug along the base of the cut. A certain amount of alluvium is removed and placed in the ditch to form a dam. Using water he has piped from a spring above his cabin, the ditch is filled and the "dammed material" permitted to soak overnight. The next day a slight break is made in the dam and the saturated aggregate courses into the riffle box below. The heavy gold then collects along the riffles.

It was time to leave, but I had one more question to ask. "How do you obtain your supplies without a car?" was my query. George smiled as he answered in his broad Norwegian accent, "Never needed no car. If friends don't drop by, Casey and me walk to town." He wouldn't accept our offered ride saying, "Folks are due up tonight to take us to Lee Vining." As we headed down the canyon, I hoped his friends would not forget. A 10-mile hike at age 73 seemed rather strenuous.

I need not have worried. Early the next morning we saw George and Casey standing on the corner. "I see your friends made it," I commented after we had said our hellos. "No, they didn't show up. Casey and I came on in. I guess they won't be coming this week so we are going to hike into the mountains and try for a deer," was his reply. Men like George Totland will not worry about the energy shortage.

Long ago, the men who came West after gold learned to live in harmony with the land. They found that man's inner-self provided many of the "tools" needed for happiness and survival. The Golden Ghosts live on, and so do the spirits of the men who gave them their brief hour of glory. □

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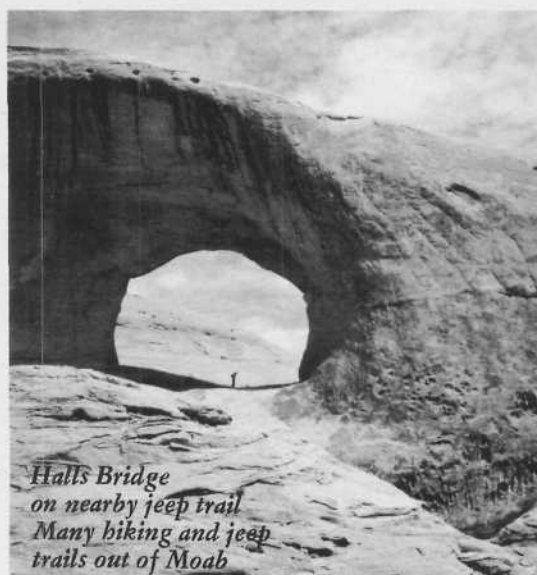


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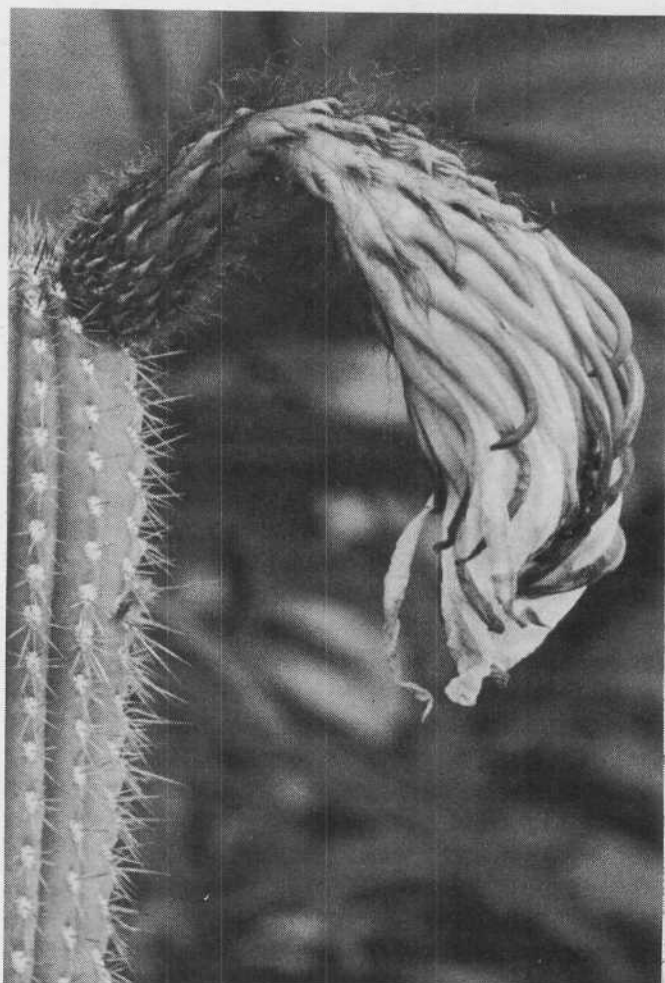
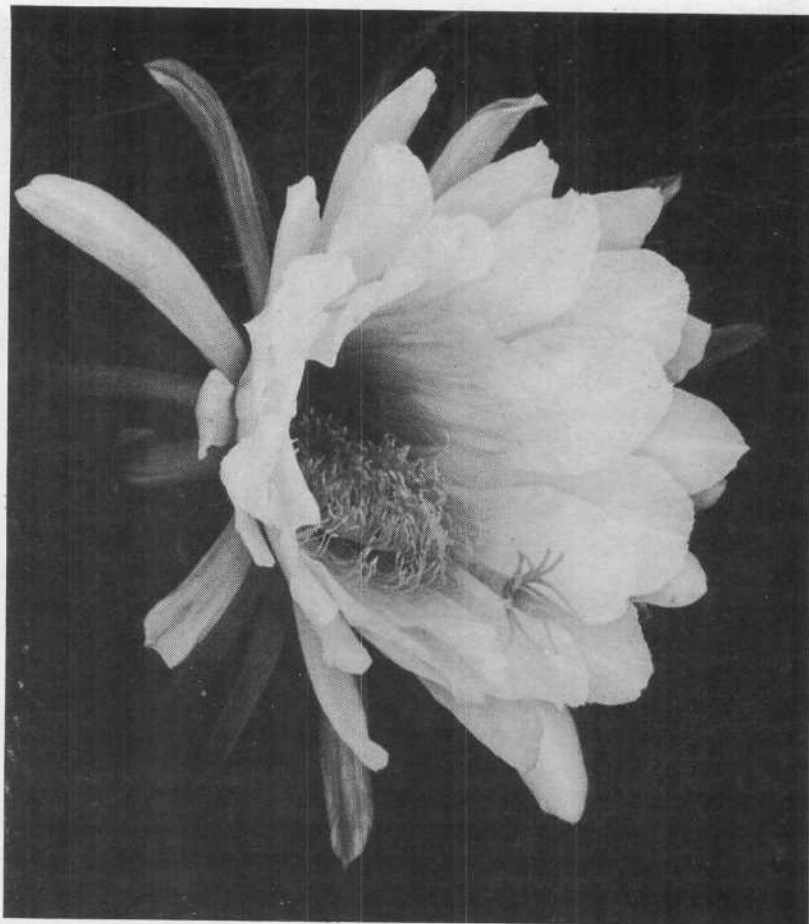
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# Night Blooming Cereus

by HANS BAERWALD

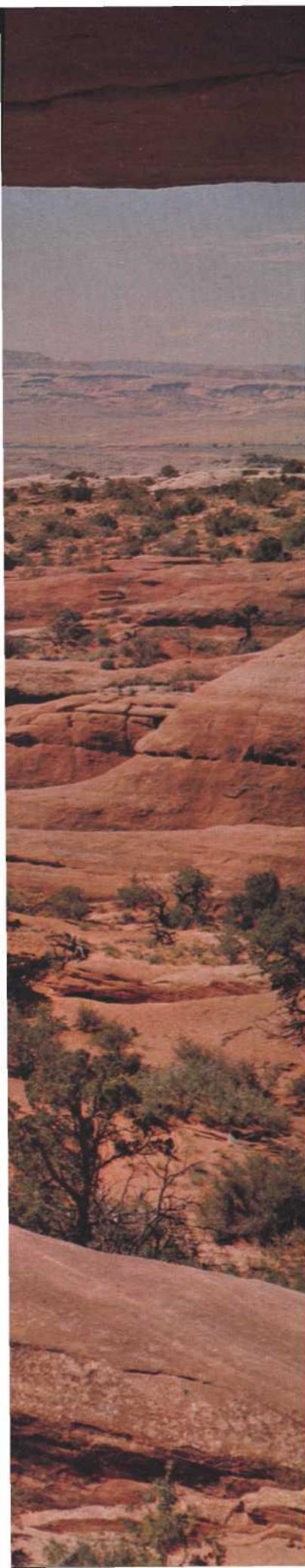
*Graphically pictured here is the short life span of the bloom of the Night Blooming Cereus. Lower left: The bud, in the early evening of the first day; Right: In full bloom at night; Lower right: The dead bloom the morning after.*











# Backpacking in the Arches

by BUDDY MAYS

Color photo by F.A. Barnes

**W**ATCH OUT for rattlesnakes, scorpions, and flashfloods," the ranger will tell you, flashing his official smile. "Don't fall off a cliff, don't break your leg, and don't get hit by lightning. But above all," he adds, as he looks over your hiking gear, "don't forget to have fun."

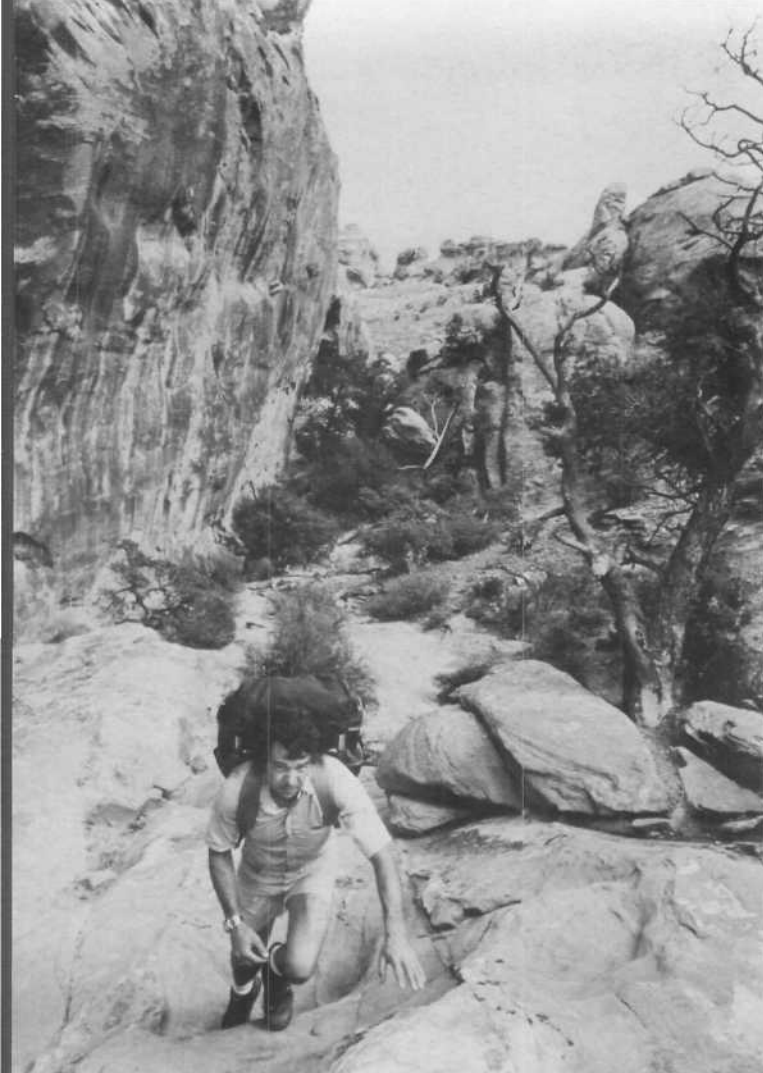
This unusual bit of instruction is what most backpackers are besieged with as they check in with the National Park Service at the entrance to the Arches National Park, five miles north of Moab, Utah. Here, at one of America's newest National Parks (established on November 12, 1971) hikers and back-country enthusiasts are finding an untouched and untamed wilderness to explore at their leisure.

Lying in the very heart of the famed "Red Rock" country of southeastern

Utah, the Arches contain nearly 84,000 acres of Nature's most exquisite startling artistry. And, to the amazement of visitors acquainted with the massive traffic jams and campground overuse of Yosemite and Yellowstone, the Arches is experiencing an unusually small amount of tourist traffic.

"Compared to the rest of America's parks," said one backpacking Californian, "the Arches is totally and magnificently deserted."

Deserted, the Arches may be. Barren and lifeless, however, it most certainly is not. Over a period of 150 million years, the unceasing tools of nature have created a monolithic forest of sandstone giants which, even now, show only minuscule traces of man's visitation. Massive stone mushrooms cast mystical shadows across a moon-like landscape cooling, in



*Backpacking in the Arches is a great experience in solitude and untamed wilderness. The author is shown here in the Arches backcountry.*

their shade, the homes of a hundred different species of wildlife. Flower-covered trails wind through obscure canyons of bright red rock, creating ribbons of yellow and gold and purple. Here and there, the foot-long dinosaur-like shape of a collared lizard or the buzzing whir of a rattlesnake will induce a desert hiker to watch where he may step.

Then, there are the Arches themselves, adding a spectacular panorama of natural windows to an already beautiful land. Names like Landscape, Pine Tree and Partition Arch, do little to describe what 150 million years of unplanned craftsmanship has created. And even though Arches now has National Park status, back-country hikers continually discover new and unmapped "windows of light" in some of the more remote regions.

Designated as a "Desert Playground" by many tour books and automobile travel guides, the Arches is neither desert nor playground to most active backpackers. In many of the canyons, tiny springs gush from cracks in the sandstone, leaving in their passing hanging gardens of

lush ferns and wild grasses. Pockets of rainwater dot the landscape and flashfloods from distant rainstorms fill gullies and canyons with tons of muddy water. In winter, the rain turns to snow and again the canyons are filled with run-off. Quite often, in fact, the problem is too much water instead of too little.

As to whether or not the Arches is a playground, most hikers will readily agree that although there are few areas as wonderful to hike in as the Arches, there is little opportunity to "play." Rattlesnakes, scorpions, flashflood and lightning are hazards that a hiker or camper cannot ignore. In an area as rugged as the Red Rock country of Utah, it takes only one misstep to create an emergency. The park itself, however, is the teacher and guardian both in most cases. One park ranger, who has been stationed at the Arches for almost a decade, describes in one sentence the type of people who hike in the park.

"They go in as flamboyant fools," he says, "and come out as very able amateurs."

Backpacking in the Arches, or "ambl-

ing" as the ranger so aptly put it, is one of the Southwest's most exciting adventures. Most of the back-country trails, although primitive, are level, well marked and easy enough for children over five. An over-abundance of natural shelters in the form of overhangs and amphitheaters allows hikers to choose the campsite that best fits their needs.

Listed below are a few tips that might make hiking in areas such as the Arches a little easier for those who are accustomed to mountain or alpine camping. There is, of course, no definite law that states just what a backpacker will or will not carry, but maybe the following information will turn what might have been just a camping trip into an enjoyable and exciting experience.

1. Throw away your metal eating plates and equip each member of the party with a plastic Frisbee. Not only do they make an excellent plate, they can also be used as wash bowl, fire fanner, shovel, and fun-and-games creator.

2. Leave tents and parkas at home. In most areas like the Arches, rain showers are short and infrequent. A lightweight army poncho will serve as both shelter (two snapped together make a great tent) and windbreaker. For chilly mornings, bring along a wool shirt.

3. Instead of soap, towels, dishrags and pot cleaners, try using toothpaste to remove the black from hard-to-clean cooking pots. "Stains will disappear like magic."

4. Unless you have a pre-planned destination with a natural source of water available, carry one gallon of water per person per day. This will insure plenty of liquid for an emergency dry camp.

5. Always carry a snake-bite kit, either the suction type or anti-venom. Although a rattlesnake is one of the most timid creatures on earth, accidents sometimes happen.

6. Leave heavy equipment such as hatchets, hunting knives, glass bottles and canned food in the pantry or garage. Hatchets are unnecessary since broken wood is usually found everywhere. A small pocket knife is much lighter and handier than a hunting knife. Bottles and canned food can be replaced by freeze-dried trail food.

Take nothing into any wilderness area that you don't plan to bring out. Nature doesn't need help redecorating her domain. And, above all, enjoy your hike. □



# ARCHES

## NATIONAL PARK

0 1 2 3  
Scale in miles

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137 North Main St. Moab, Utah  
Art. by Jean-Claude Gal

- 28 Salt Valley
- 27 Tower Arch
- 26 KLONDIKE BLUFFS

- 25 FIERY FURNACE

- 24 Panorama Point

- 23 South Window
  - 22 North Window
  - 21 Turret Arch
  - 20 Parade of Elephants
  - 19 Double Arch
  - 18 Ribbon Arch
  - 17 Cove Arch
  - 16 Cove of Caves
  - 15 Garden of Eden
  - 14 Ham Rock
  - 13 Balanced Rock
- ### WINDOWS SECTION

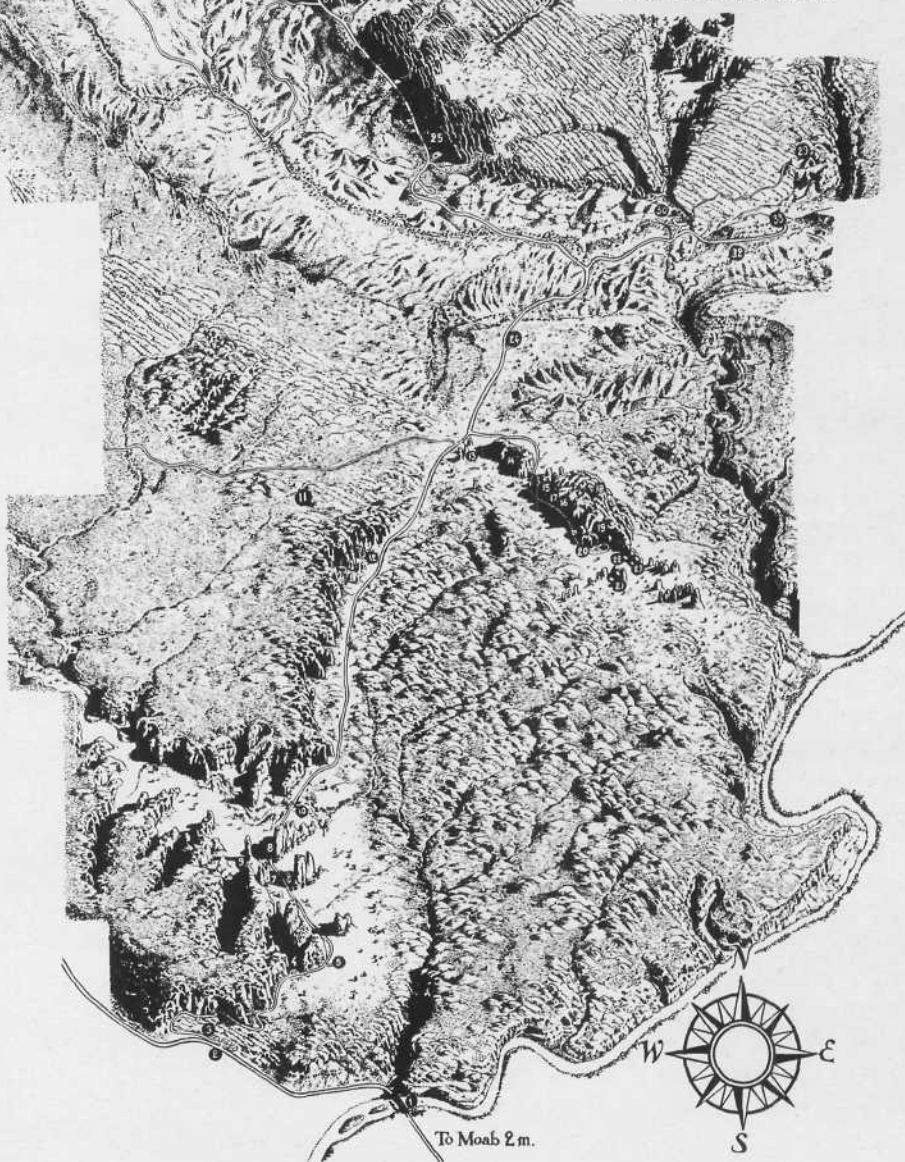
- 12 Rock Pinnacles
- 11 Willow Flats

- 10 Courthouse Wash
  - 9 Sheep Rock
  - 8 Tower of Babel
  - 7 The 3 Gossips
  - 6 The Organ
  - 5 La Sal Mountains Viewpoint
  - 4 Park Avenue
- ### TOWERS SECTION

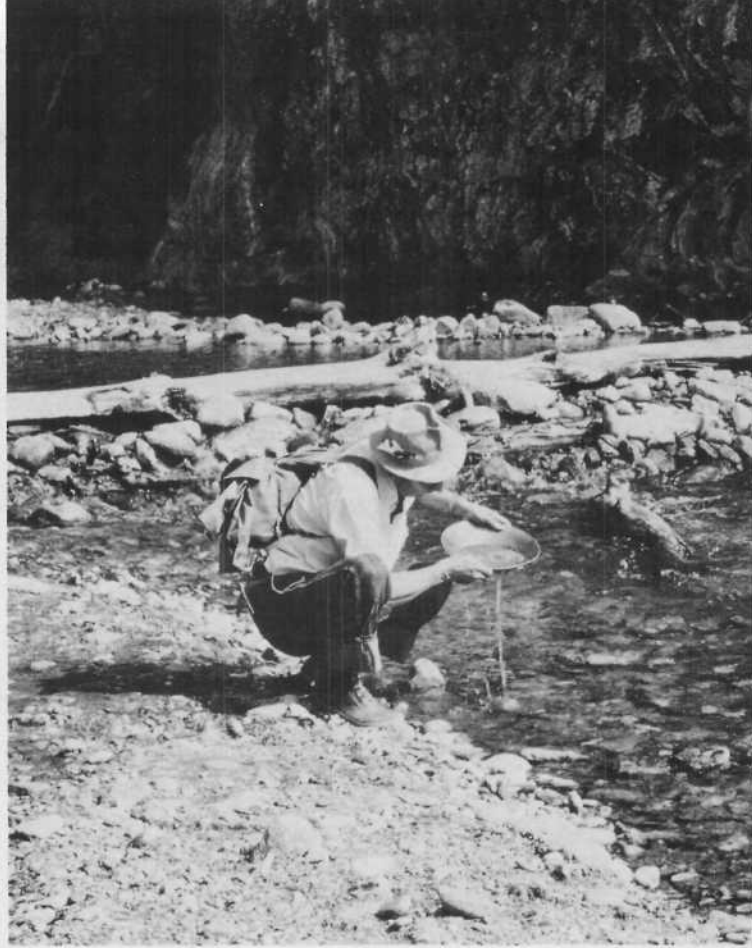
- 3 Visitor Center
- 2 Entrance of the Park
- 1 Colorado River

- 46 Dark Angel
- 45 Fin Canyon
- 44 Double O Arch
- 43 Navajo Arch
- 42 Wall Arch
- 41 Partition Arch
- 40 Landscape Arch
- 39 Pine Tree Arch
- 38 Tunnel Arch
- 37 Campground
- 36 Skyline Arch
- 35 Broken Arch
- 34 DEVILS GARDEN

- 33 Viewpoints
- 32 Cache Valley
- 31 Salt Wash
- 30 Wolfe Ranch
- 29 DELICATE ARCH



# GOLD IN THE SAN GABRIELS



IN THE sprawling, conglomerate squeeze-in of eight million residents in the Greater Los Angeles Area, only a rare few questing souls have discovered the primitive beauty and isolated grandeur that is so jealously locked in the crags and canyon interfolds of the nearby San Gabriel Mountain Range.


Ranging jaggedly along the northeastern skyline of the Los Angeles complex, like a mile-high curtain of rugged alpine mystery, this serrated fragment of the Angeles National Forest lies seductively waiting for those adventurous ones who would enjoy the serenity of several hundred thousand acres of mountain peaks, gushing streams, pictorial lakes and contorted canyons. All this, mind you, almost completely unfamiliar to those nearby millions, is within 30 freeway minutes from the Los Angeles City Hall.

The foothill towns of Azusa, Glendora, San Dimas and Claremont are the entry portals to year-round fun in this almost ignored Southern California mountainland. Fishing for rainbow trout in well-stocked streams and lakes is permissible all 12 months. Gold-panning along a gurgling stream is happy therapy for the energetic optimist, frequently paying off handsomely in gleaming fragments of golden beauty. Body dunking in the frequent pools and ponds along the canyon floor is a big water sport, especially among the athletic teens and younger. Camping, back-packing, picnicking, hiking and Sunday sight-seeing are other popular year-round activities

*Morris Dam floods  
gorge in the San Gabriels.*







*Old-timer pans for gold  
on upper East Fork.*

among those Angelenos who already know the appeal of this peak and deep mountain domain that lies wild and primitive on the doorstep of one of the world's largest cities.

"Yep, exclaimed an old-timer, as he wagged a gnarled finger in the all-encompassing direction of the surrounding canyon walls, "there's still plenty of wild varmints a'hidin' in these parts." Recent sights confirm the old Ranger's statements, as deer, coyotes, black bear, mountain lions, bobcats, bighorn mountain sheep and other such critters continue to populate the heavily-grown canyon slopes and rocky notches in this virginal land.

The unpopulated remoteness and sparsity of both people and buildings in this mountainous area come as a sobering shock to those flatland Angelenos who are sardined into the condominium palaces of saturation "down below." With the exception of several small roadside establishments at Camp Baldy, Crystal Lake, and at Hunter's and Follow's Camps in the East Fork of the San Gabriel River, where unfestooned meals and trailer anchorage may be found, the

solitary structures visible are the strategically scattered Ranger and Fire Stations of the forest.

The feeder roads into these various highland playgrounds all uniformly veer off northward from the valley highway systems. San Dimas Reservoir is reached after a few twisting miles past Park and golf course, then a snake-like climb up the canyon to the clot of concrete which constitutes the dam. Parking is provided for deep water trout fishermen who wish to undertake the extremely precipitous loose-rock walkway down to the water level of the lake.

A long mile away, along a narrow mountain road, one may park next to the San Dimas Fire Station. This is the entry approach to the shallow end of the reservoir. Fishermen (or picnickers) must tote all their tackle and gear, then hike along the stream bed for a half-mile to reach the water. Rainbow trout are frequently stocked here, and mossy shallows will produce hungry blue-gills. Best of all, for the dyed-in-the-outdoors nature lover, this magnificently beautiful gorge of blue water, bulging mountain shoulders and usual sprinkling of active deer, coyotes and hawks on the opposite shore is ordinarily visited by a meager handful of scattered fishermen. Take along your binoculars: it's that kind of lookable country.

The most famous landmark in Southern California is Mt. Baldy. (Correctly, Mt. San Antonio.) Stretching 10,064 feet upward into the blue, it looms bare-faced and friendly 40 miles east of Los Angeles. Possessing particular emphasis and nobility during the winter months, it regally bears its massive mantle of gleaming, white snow-banners high above the vast Los Angeles plains which reach to the distant ocean—plains made Chamber of Commerce famous for their snowlessness. Throngs of winter-sports-hungry enthusiasts exuberantly invade Old Baldy Village every snowy weekend to scale the peak via the scenic ski-lift, then carve glided etchings on the mile-high snow banks. As snowfalls heavy enough for satisfactory skiing only occur when downpour rains drench the lowlands, a common bumper-sticker sign seen reads, "Think Snow!"

Panamint Pete, former sheriff in Death Valley, operated an early 1920 supply service to miners during the heavy snow season—on skis! "Many

by LESTER F. ZIEGLER



times," he said, "when there was 10 or 15 feet of snow in the canyons, the only way I could find the mine was by looking for a wisp of smoke curling up through the snow. Then I'd start digging. More than once me, my skis and my supplies, along with a ton of snow, would tumble through to the miner's tunnel below," he chuckled.

For the low-lander who does seek out this mountainous retreat of scenic beauty and wide variety of outdoor activities, the great San Gabriel Canyon offers a veritable grab-bag of assorted man-sized sights, sounds and a satisfying engagement with Mother Nature.



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Leaving the foothill community of Azusa, in a northerly direction, one is scarcely conscious of entering the canyon mouth of a huge mountain range. But speeding gradually upward, the widespread arms of the canyon merge, like coming to the hinge in a pair of opened scissors. Suddenly, the road plunges through a cut that is just two lanes wide, which just about matches the width of the base of the canyon.

The loopings of the excellent black-top roadway mount the canyon walls, increasing altitude with every mile. At the 1152-foot level, one first confronts the monstrous face of Morris Dam. The sculptured spillway is a swooping flair of frozen artistry in concrete design. Behind the massive face of the dam, the water-filled scope of the canyon itself becomes apparent. With a holding capacity of 30,085-acre-feet of water, this facility provides flood control, irrigation water and well-water levels for much of the Los Angeles basin that spreads to the Pacific Ocean.

Incongruously positioned in this locale of alpine loveliness, a gigantic skeleton

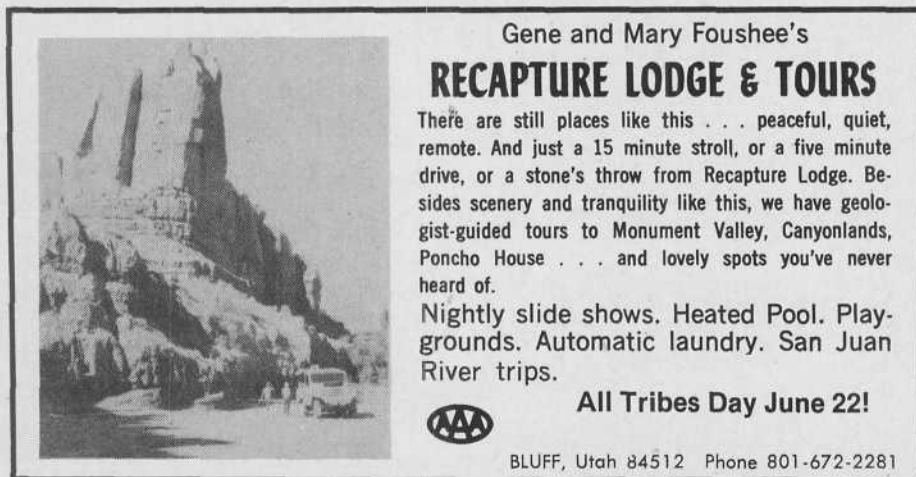
of steel forms a metal chute that ranges angularly from the water's level to a point high above the dam. This gargantuan instrument, natives report, is used by the U. S. Navy for the testing of projectiles and explosives in the depths of the water below. Visitors are not permitted on any portion of this lake or its miles of surrounding shores.

Two miles farther, the gigantic earth-fill San Gabriel Dam spans the canyon. Holding 44,614-acre-feet of water, this facility has recently undergone an energetic draining and silt-removal program. Via the use of massive conveyor belts and heavy earth movers, this extensive engineering achievement will witness the removal of five million tons of silt-sand every 100 working days. These millions of tons of silt are being routed via miles of conveyor belts to distant Burro Canyon. When the canyon is filled, it will be developed into a primitive area park for hikers and backpacking campers.

Directly ahead in the road up the canyon lies a point of geographical decision. Resembling a palm with three directional fingers, the motorist may choose to proceed straight on through to the North Fork of the San Gabriel. It's a favorite spot of the fishermen who appreciate the remote isolation of this boulder-strewn canyon.

To the west, or on the left, there lies a great scenic country, good fishing and stream-side picnic sites along the West Fork of the San Gabriel River. This is exclusively for backpackers, and a large steel gate permits passage only to the vehicles of the Forestry Department, Fire Wardens and Fish and Game people. The farther one walks, the fewer the people, and after about three miles one has the entire world of narrow canyon, tumbling water and primitive seclusion to himself. Rare, indeed, are the hikers who journey the seven miles to 2,385-foot-high Cogswell Reservoir, even though the fishing is excellent in this lake—when permitted.

Fifteen miles directly ahead from the bridge junction, over good but winding mountain roads, lies deeply-set, mile-high Crystal Lake. Fishing is generally good for rainbow trout, stocked regularly by the California Department of Fish and Game. There are rarely enough people visiting here to present driving, parking or fishing congestion. Boats are for rent,



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but eating and other comfort facilities are elemental in elegance. This jewel of a lake, set deeply in a mountain notch, is at the 5700-foot-level.

The infrequent occasions when Crystal Lake will be crowded depend entirely upon when winter snow is on the ground. The white powder attracts hordes of snow-hungry Southern Californians. Otherwise, it is hard to believe that so many millions of people live within a few miles, yet never visit this lovely lake hung in the clouds.

Without doubt, the area offering the greatest variety in trailering, camping, fishing, picnicking and goldpanning is the East Fork of the San Gabriel Canyon. A sharp right turn at the junction point, heading eastward over the long steel bridge, will bring the visitor to long stretches of tree-lined, boulder-strewn, rushing waters of the mountain river. Access paths and trails lead to the bottom of the canyon, and various picnic areas are established. Of special interest to those historically inclined, the largest picnic area is situated near the Cattle Canyon Bridge, on the site of what at one time was the rough and tumble gold mining camp of Eldoradoville. A flourishing gold camp was started here in 1855, and it is recorded that in the election year of 1861 there were 400 votes for Abraham Lincoln to come out of the river settlement. Sadly, torrential rains and the resultant "gully-washer" floods have scoured away almost every last vestige of this romantic old river-bottom gold town and its 2,000 inhabitants of yesteryear. At Follow's Camp, the original general store that purveyed supplies to the miners still stands. This camp was the home terminus of the stage line which provided the sole transportation between Azusa and the Canyon from 1894 to 1929.

Goldpanning continues to attract those active romantics who exert great energy in searching for those elusive nuggets or fragments of yellow metal. A few of the roadside establishments will rent either the traditional gold pan or the more sophisticated sluice box for those visitors who have strong backs, great patience and an abiding optimism that the gods of fortune will smile upon them. And as any of the natives will tell you, "Ol' Doc King washed out over half an ounce one afternoon last week." Now that's real man talk that is 24-carat incentive!

Publicity has been at a negligent level in boosting this delightful clutch of mountain play areas. Consequently, there are many times when a vista of a mile or two of canyon, stream and mountain panorama may reveal not more than two or three meandering fishermen. Yet, a curious paradox of human proclivity, about eight million people reside within an hour of these secluded wilderness playgrounds, and only an incidental minority have ever explored into this rustic paradise.

For those unnumbered blasé Southern California motorists who offer mutter, "Gosh! Where can we go, where can we do something different?" consider the San Gabriel Mountains.

Thar's many kinds of gold in them hills. ☐

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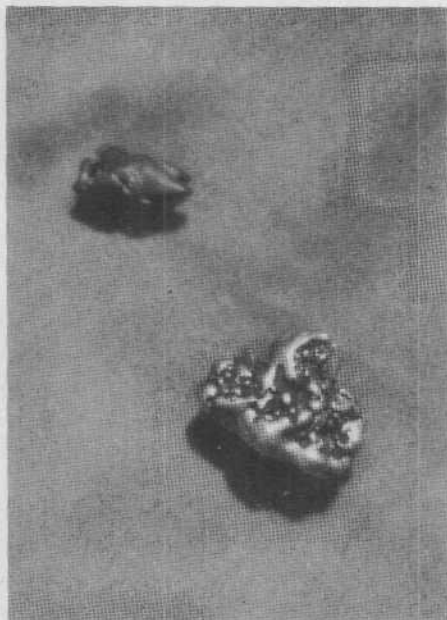
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# Mr. Pegleg

## Responds...



Last two nuggets received  
[Shown  $\frac{3}{4}$  size]

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

The April issue carried a challenge to Mr. Pegleg to come forth after a long absence to prove he was still alive. Just prior to going to press, sure enough a letter, photographs, carbon copies of previous correspondence, plus TWO nuggets gave us ample proof that he was the real McCoy. The letter and a resume of the letters sent, but not received, during 1969-70 are produced here to bring the enigma up to date. The nuggets, including the last two, are on display in our editorial office

WELL, WELL, so I'm supposed to have married in 1969 or 1970—according to Slim Pickings—and kicked the bucket in "about July of 1971." How quaint, if true! But "Slim" is 100% dead wrong in all his suppositions. As to "Slim's" thimblefull of gold—photo in April '74 issue—I would never knock another man's story about gold—whatever his story may be when published. My only comment is that from the photo, his gold is very fine, and the surface appears smooth, almost shiny. I'm reasonably sure that comparison with my nuggets will show they are not the same.

Now, I suppose the first order of business is to prove who I am. I just happened to keep a carbon copy of all letters and scripts sent to *Desert*, and I presume you still have them in your files. Let's go back to January, 1965 when my first letter (with the story) was reproduced on page 20 of the March, 1965 issue. I am enclosing my carbon copy of that letter for comparison with the original if you still have it, or comparison with the reproduction on page 20 if you don't have the original. My original letter was undated when typed. Noticing this, I put a date on the carbon with a red grease pencil (1/2/65) three days later when I wrote a second letter on January 5, 1965 (carbon also enclosed) with which I included an enlarged Black & White photo of a nugget as found "in place." The photo was used on Page 20 (March '65 issue) as a background for my letter, but without any comment of my January 5th letter accompanying it to the effect that one of the nuggets was shown in place,

circled with a black grease pencil, etc., etc. The photo as used was cropped somewhat, but in the extreme lower right corner you can still see the tip of my shoe—as also mentioned in the January 5th letter.

Further, I am enclosing another print of this same photo, again with the nugget circled, plus another photo I took at the time (which I didn't send to you) with several nuggets I'd found with the detector and laid on the ground in a group to show how the black nuggets blended with the natural rocky ground. I've drawn arrows to them.

I believe this proof is conclusive and absolute!

Now, to get the story back on the track where it was derailed in 1969, I've retyped (from the carbons) a combined resume of my three letters of 1969 and the final one of July 11, 1970, none of which you apparently received. I'm doing this so the readers of *Desert* will have a complete, unbroken continuity of the Black Gold story, even if it has been delayed four years.

Now then, I'm enclosing a nugget with this, one of the tumbled ones (to take most of the black coating off), and which procedure was previously explained in detail. And another original "black" nugget.

Finally, if this gets through to you, I'll have some interesting photos to send next time of bags of black nuggets and a couple more bits of interesting news.

Sincerely,

The man who found Pegleg's black gold



## Resume of Correspondence During 1969-70

January 23, 1969

Yes, I am still around, happy and healthy and well nourished by the Pegleg black gold I found.

Perhaps it is time once again to bring matters up to date on the black nuggets, specifically to answer the January, 1969 issue. Presumably readers will, by now, be fairly familiar with the general details of my find and the subsequent developments so I won't rehash everything.

First off, Victor Stoyanow's story, "Black Bonanza" in the January, 1969 issue was an excellent bit of research, intelligent reasoning and active field work, the essence of which is to substantiate my original geologic theory of the origin of the black nuggets. The fact that Stoyanow brings out the finding of other black nuggets in various places in the Salton Sea basin lends credence to my first accounts that black nuggets might be found in other areas wherever the presumed ancient stream bed had been exposed. The explanation he gives of the "Beach Placer" fits in very logically and the account of the black nuggets being exposed by a Chubasco wind also holds true. Right here I will give another small clue. The area where I found my black nuggets was not *all* exactly like the pebbled surface shown in the photographs I sent in. I actually found some nuggets where the sand had been blown away from them—which nuggets had been covered with sand during an earlier trip, and deep enough to be beyond the reach of my detector.

Mr. DeWalt's letter in this same issue (January, 1969) indicates that he dug the holes I mentioned. Perhaps so, and as I've always said and believed, there should be more nuggets deeper in my site—where a detector couldn't reach them.

One of the things I've thought about doing from the very beginning was to take in a small dozer and start peeling down the discovery site about a foot at a time, going over the ground with a detector after each pass. This wouldn't be very expensive until I got the hill and mound cut down, and then if nuggets were still present, regular mining operations would have to be used for deeper work. Why haven't I done this? Well, for one thing, I don't need any more black nuggets. Secondly, and more important, I'd bet that within 24 hours after I made the first cuts, the place would be swarming with claim-stakers and all the potential troubles I've mentioned would begin.

It has been five years now since I reported the find and quite frankly, I've been a little curious to see how the next finder would handle the matter. Would he keep silent or become the classic figure of the Old West who staggers in with a poke of nuggets in one hand and a bottle of red-eye in the other and proceeds to tell the world all about it—and then ends up washing dishes for the guys who are counting the gold? It isn't for me!

May, 1969 issue

Mr. Miller's letter. Well, I haven't read Dillon's book, "The Ancient River of Gold," and I don't know how many black nuggets Mr. Dillon has handled, but as to the ques-

*Photo shows  
six nuggets  
as they appeared  
inconspicuously  
on the gravelly  
desert.*



tions Mr. Miller poses about the color of the nuggets I've found, I have already made various mentions of this previously, but will be more specific now. Those nuggets I found on the surface and which appeared to have been on the surface for some time were not shiny or coal black nor did they have a black manganese coating. Instead, they were more of a dull or satin-black finish, even running to a dark, ashy gray, the black coating being oxidized copper that was alloyed with gold in the nuggets. The original expression used long before I came onto the scene described them pretty well as being the "burned black gold of the Pegleg."

Nuggets found underground sometimes showed a light reddish cast, probably from copper molecules not completely blackened by oxygen in the air. I've already described the various methods I used to remove the black outside coating, mainly by tumbling which gave the nuggets their most natural look (like nuggets recovered from streams) and at the same time remove them from the category of certain-to-be-recognized Pegleg nuggets of solid black. The nugget I'm enclosing this time is one from a batch I tumbled about four years ago, and it appears to be slowly tarnishing again, i.e., the exposed copper molecules starting to darken again even though the nugget has been in a sack locked away and not exposed to heat or light since being tumbled. I'd guess it weighs about an ounce. (1974 note: this is one you apparently did not get.)

Anyone viewing the nuggets at Desert's office may ponder at the wide variety, so I'll mention again that I've made a point of sending nuggets in their original black state from the surface, from underground including one or two with the light reddish hue, of ashy gray-black, acid cleaned, retuned, tumbled, etc., etc., to show the *full array* of nuggets and what I did with them. Actually, the great majority, especially those from the surface, were of the dull "burned" black finish.

November, 1969 issue

Mr. Gilbert O. French's letter in the November, 1969 issue. I am neither confirming nor denying that the channels mentioned by Mr. French are where I found the black nuggets, but my original theory was certainly based on the ancient channel or river bed idea. I am not familiar with the Geoscope, but my instincts tell me that one day science will come up with an instrument that a man can carry and which will detect specific metals underground, including gold, at a considerable distance, even in alloy form and tell how much there is. Of course, when that comes, the Pegleg gold that is left—maybe—might be small potatoes to what can be found all over the world.

Well, this should update the Pegleg black nuggets, at least to the present time. I haven't been to the discovery site for over a year now, but perhaps this spring I'll take a ride out and see what, if anything, has happened there. One final clue. Don't expect the hill and mound to stand out like a sore thumb or to see a sign there saying, "this is it." The site is mighty inconspicuous and, I'm sure, has been walked over more than once.

Final letter of July 11, 1970

I wrote to you about six months ago, and two or three letters prior to that bringing everything up to date on the Pegleg black nuggets, also sending more nuggets to you. Presumably, you never got the packages. Frankly, I've been afraid quite a while that somebody was going to purloin one of them, so maybe they have. All were mailed with plenty of first class postage, but of course, since there was no return address, I suspect someone just stole them. I still have copies of all the letters and can send them again, but the thought occurs to me now that no one may be interested any longer in the black Pegleg gold.

Sincerely,

The man who found Pegleg's black gold



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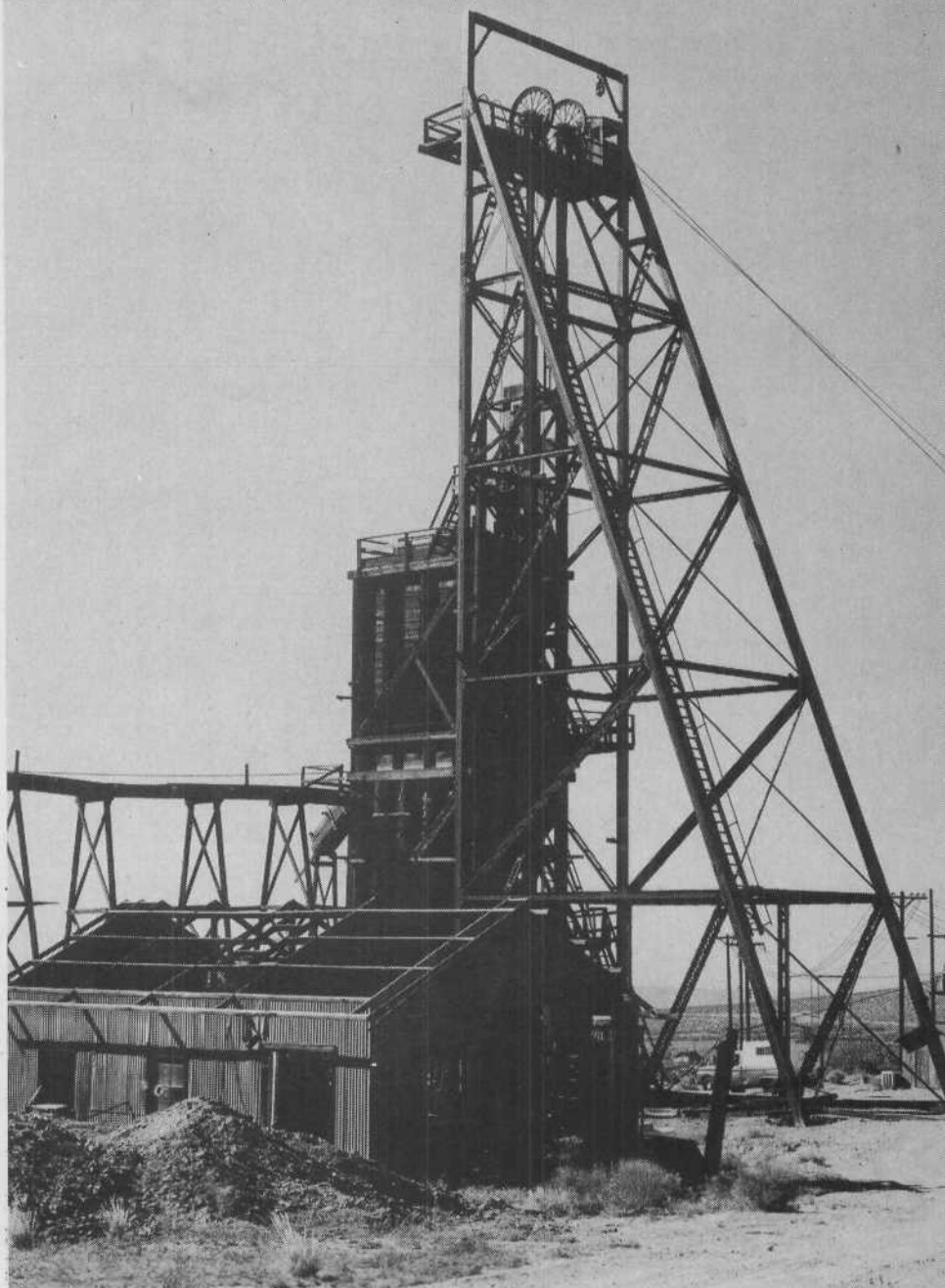
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### THE MINES OF RAND

*Continued from Page 15*

formed and millions of dollars in tungsten was produced before the close of World War I. The Atolia area is still rated as one of the prime sources of tungsten in the United States.

With the end of World War I, and a diminished demand for tungsten, it seemed that the Rand District again faced a decline. But, a third source of wealth was discovered. On April 12, 1919, two men, Williams and Nossner, discovered silver at the site of the present community of Red Mountain. While working for Kern County Sheriff J. W.

Kelly, they found the ore body that was to become the fabulous "Kelly" silver mine. The location, trampled by the feet of thousands of gold prospectors, had been overlooked for more than 20 years. Silver doesn't look like gold.

Kelly formed the California Rand Silver Mining Company to work the claim and it is said that more than 16 million dollars in silver was recovered before the mine closed in 1929.

The history of the Randsburg area seemed to prophesy a new strike at "just the right time," but the 1930s brought the great depression, and a different story. By 1930, the Kelly was closed and tungsten production was at a low ebb. In 1933, the Randsburg Railway stopped



The Kelly mine, in Red Mountain, was discovered in 1919. California's largest, it produced more than \$16 million in its 10 years of operation. The mine shafts extend under Highway 395, and the head frame can easily be seen from this major thoroughfare.

running, and in 1934 the tracks were torn up. In 1942, the Yellow Aster shut down, and other Randsburg mines also closed. It seemed that the handwriting was on the wall.

Today, all of the mines are closed. A mill runs tailings, now or then, in Atolia or Randsburg, but the large mill at the Yellow Aster is gone. It has been destroyed by vandals. The hotels are gone, the saloons are closed, and students no longer attend the Randsburg School. But, Randsburg is *not* a ghost town. It has not returned to the sagebrush. There are still more than 200 local residents in Randsburg (and more in Johannesburg, Red Mountain and Atolia) who, as one of them put it, "like to breathe air you cannot see."

Another phrase, often heard, is that "There is still plenty of high-grade down there." A decline in the price of gold, combined with a rise in labor costs, closed the Mines of Rand. With the price of gold now over \$100 per ounce on international markets . . . who knows what the future holds?

In any event, if you are one of those who enjoys "seeing" and "feeling" history, there is plenty of your kind of "gold" in Randsburg today. The next time you are moving north or south along Highway 395, in the northern Mojave, take the turnoff to Randsburg. It is only a mile. Stop and have a "Coke" at the old-fashioned counter in the General Store. Stick your head in the Post Office where Frederic Mooers was once postmaster. Take a stroll up Butte Avenue and listen in your mind for the sound of horses' hoofs and the squeek of the ore wagons' wheels.

Can you hear the thunder from the stamp mill up on the mountain? It's gone, but the "glory hole" of the Yellow Aster can still be seen. If you are there on a weekend, visit the Desert Museum and see the sample ores and artifacts of yesterday. Take your lunch. There's a picnic area next to the Museum. Stay a while, and live a few moments of yesteryear. □

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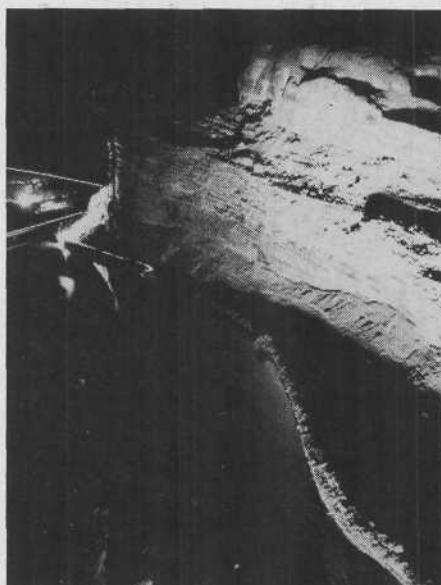
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# Desert Falcon

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AN ELEGANT bird, the American Kestrel, one to lend distinction to even the most desolate of deserts. Perched on his high outlook post, keen falcon eyes scanning the desert, he is obviously a bird of class, too. Tailored impeccably in tones of reddish-brown, highlighted tastefully with slate blue at the wings and head, he wears a cap of rich brown that adds considerable dash to the bold black and white markings of his face and throat.

He may be one of the smallest of his clan, being only a little larger than robin-size, but he has all the falcon attributes: the scimitar-shaped wings, the hooked bill, the strong, curved talons. He is master of the desert sky, an olympic star, his flight one of high speed and fast maneuver.

Or, sitting still as a statue on his observation post and spotting a rodent on the ground below, he makes his arrow-swift attack: a plunging, plummeting downflight to strike from above. An instant kill, with the hooked beak, and the prize is carried aloft for dining. Capable of subduing prey almost his size, and called a sparrow hawk since sometimes small birds are on his menu, this little kestrel also eats small lizards and small snakes. But of all food, insects are his favorite and make up far and away the greatest part of his diet. Grasshoppers and the like are considered particularly delicious.

Insect catching requires a refinement of common hunting styles—a marvelously timed hovering flight. Dropping downward from his perch, he pauses in flight. Wings beating easily, tail down, he seems to hang in the air with no effort at all, perhaps as long as a minute, all the while eyeing the ground. Landing suddenly, he has his game—a grasshopper. He may eat it there, or more likely carry it to a favorite perch.

He's leisurely about dining, too, as Zoologist Bent observed. Holding the now defunct grasshopper upright in his talons, he proceeds slowly to eat it, commencing at the head and working on down the body, discarding the small front legs and wings with a flip of his beak. The big jumping hind legs are eaten drumstick style, picked clean, the leftovers tossed away. The remaining plump abdomen—the *piece de resistance*, is swallowed whole if small, or eaten bite by bite with obvious gusto.





This course being now over, the bird neatly cleans his talons, finally wiping his beak clean along a branch.

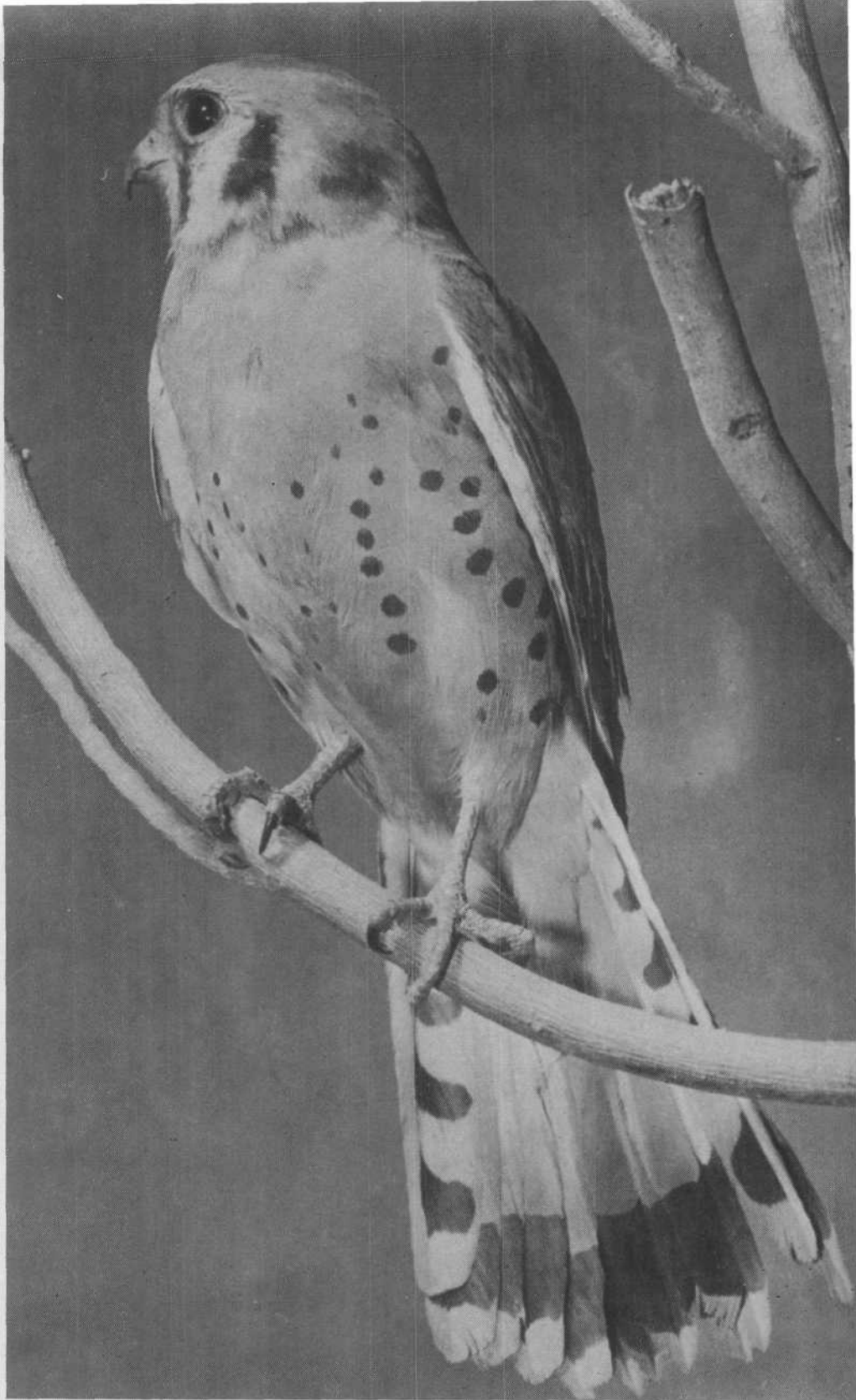
In a way, his dining procedure is a part of an overall kind of gentlemanly life, run by a rigid code of manners. Take courtship, for example. According to one eye witness report, it goes something like this: the gentleman puts on a first class air show, a demonstration of great flying skill, accompanied by loud sound effects; "KILLY KILLY KILLY" screamed falcon style. The lady perched nearby would certainly seem to be impressed by the show, since she, too, is screaming falcon style. At this point, the gentleman, swooping down behind a sagebush, grabs a lizard, and flying to her side, presents it to her. Does she accept his offering? Alas, no. Reaching over suddenly with her hard beak, she whacks him smartly on the head.

Taken back only momentarily, he offers it to her again. For the moment, things seem to be looking up, for she takes the lizard in her bill—only long enough to drop it. It hardly hits the ground before the gentleman has it again, only this time he flies off to sit by himself. After a moment, the lady lands nearby. He instantly flies to her, offering the beat-up lizard once more, and this time she takes it, eats the choice parts, graciously leaving the tough leftovers for him.

Well, from now on it's a kind of social hunting together, with the gentleman doing most of the hunting, and the lady most of the eating, and things become increasingly social with mutual preening, billing and what not as the days go on, falcon courtship taking several weeks.

During this time, the gentleman has industriously hunted up several apartment possibilities: a hole in this tree or that, either natural or manufactured by some member of the woodpecker carpenter's union. The lady looks them all over, and turns up her bill. Finally she finds one she likes better—an ex-gilded flicker hole in a big saguaro cactus, and eventually lays a standard clutch of about five eggs.

Zoologist A. I. Roest, checking up on what happens then, saw that from now on the gentleman had two full-time jobs: nest defense duty, driving off intruders in slashing power dives and blows of the fist, and working the grocery detail. Dur-



*The desert falcon or sparrow hawk as captured in black and white by George McClellan Bradt and in color by George Service.*

ing the 29-31 days incubation, food was hauled to the sitting female who apparently had quite an appetite. The bird seemed to have solved his problem of how to keep the quick lunch counter going by stashing away provender. Responding to an imperative call from the little woman, he flew to a small juniper

and peering among the branches returned immediately with the hindquarters of a mouse.

The youngsters themselves, potbellied pink jobs with sparse white down when hatched, begin to open their eyes in a couple of days and already have a feeble grasping reflex. At the ripe old age of

seven days, they look more like birds, their eyes well open, wing quills developing and they are right handy at their own defense, talons up, bills open from whence issue most unfriendly sounds. Interesting to report, as the growing nestlings become able to feed themselves from the food hauled to them by their parents, the falcon code of gentlemanly manners begins to manifest itself. The little males allow their female nestmates to eat first, and personality differences begin to show up that later become so apparent: the males being much more amenable, the females

flightly and irascible. Scientists observing this think that the social tendencies of nestling life may well form the basis for the adult male behavior of prolonged courtship feeding and bringing food to the incubating female.

Not realizing what they are letting themselves in for, the young male nestlings do not worry about all this, and anyhow, everybody is pretty busy growing up until at last, in about 30 or 31 days from hatching, the youngsters are ready to leave the nest. No longer are groceries delivered to them. Mrs. Kestrel, with an insect held out invitingly and making encouraging sounds, hovers near the nest and at the critical moment when Jr. is fluttering and reaching for it, she drops it. The youngster, who really knows what catching insects is all about but doesn't know he knows it, pitches out of the nest and swoops down for it. Not being a falcon for nothing, the chances are that he grabs it before it hits the ground.

The youngsters stay around their parents for a couple of weeks to a month or more being fed and observing the niceties of hunting, and doing more and more of it themselves. In due time, they take off or, if reluctant, are finally chased away by their parents. These ex-nest mates and others of their age then form teenage social hunting groups, perhaps as many as 20 young birds in a group, for the rest of the summer.

Zoologist Tom Cade, long interested in birds of prey and wanting to see what

went on during the winter among these desert kestrels, picked an area in the Mojave between Gorman and Lancaster, California, for study. It seems that these birds, if they have formed a permanent pair bond, are apt to stay in the same area throughout the year. At the end of the breeding season, along about August, they begin to set up a hunting territory which they vigorously defend. This is a far more extensive an area than the vicinity of the nest which was defended during the young-rearing season, and while the male did the patrolling, the female now joins in. They work in pairs to drive off other birds, or take on intruders single-handed if the partner is temporarily away.

Naturally enough, Cade had to see what happened when he brought in a strange male bird which he did, tethering it where it could be seen first in this pair's territory and then in another's. Reactions from the residents differed, all the way from no-see-ignore to a screaming attack by the most aggressive who shot in like a thunderbolt and grappled with the lure bird—who, incidentally, screaming with rage gave more than a good account of himself.

So Cade then used dummies—stuffed falcons who sat tall and glassy-eyed in full view. It didn't do them a bit of good to look so high and mighty. One female resident, not about to have another gal around, hit a dummy so hard she knocked its head off.

What with posing his dummies this way and that, Cade found that if his "visiting" falcon sat low, the resident might let it alone. Observing the birds under normal conditions, he concluded that just the resident's screams of "killy killy killy" advertising his or her presence is enough to make an intruder leave. If a new bird hunts, or screams in reply, a big fight is on.

While demanding a lot of attention and effort during what should be a kind of vacation time from domestic chores, this aggressive winter behavior plays a big part in kestrel success. It helps to maintain a strong pair bond and it also guarantees adequate hunting ground all year. Having cleaned out the competition before the breeding season rolls around again, it is far easier to tighten down the real defense area to the near vicinity of the nest, and still enjoy a good hunting territory. This, of course, is a



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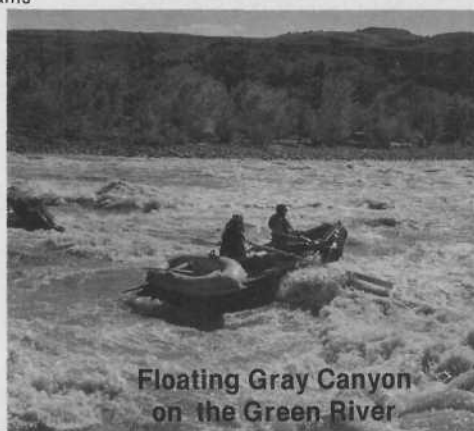
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matter of life and death in the desert.

What of other problems of desert living? True enough, the diet of insects, mice, birds, snakes, lizards provides enough moisture so that even an egg-laying female has no need of access to free water. But when it comes to coping with temperature, the falcon's ace card, as the team of Zoologists George Bartholomew and Tom Cade found, is his ability to stand quite a range in body temperature. Under normal, comfortable conditions, the bird's deep body temperature is about 104-105 degrees F., while that of the unfeathered part of his legs between 77 and 86 degrees. Subjected to high air temperature, the bird's legs begin to heat up, but his deep body temperature rises little, perhaps not at all at first. But then as the air becomes hotter and hotter, so does his body, until when his temperature climbs to 109 F., the bird must pant, throwing off excessive heat by evaporative cooling. Even this high heat can be endured for some time, if necessary, but when the body temperature hits 113 F., the bird, with feathers compressed, wings drooping, eyes bulging, must have relief or he cannot survive. His temperature drops surprisingly fast once the air temperature begins to cool, the big blood vessels in his bare legs dilate, bringing more and more heat to the surface for dissipation, and panting speeds up the job.

In day by day normal life in the desert, falcons avoid such drastic heat stress by doing their hunting in the early morning and early evening and sitting quietly in the shade during the high heat hours. In this, the clan's habit of stashing away victuals could well save wear and tear on a hot day for a gentleman with a lady on his hands who had a joint-of-pocket-mouse on her mind and expected immediate delivery.

Zoologists ponder the fact that in any social situation involving a pair of kestrels, the male is almost always subordinate to the female. She has first right to food not only caught by herself, but also by him. She has first right to favorite perches and roosts. She is the one who accepts or rejects him in the first place, and she is the one who controls copulatory behavior once the bond is formed. It would seem as if lady kestrels had it made:

And yet, maybe not.

Unaccustomed to preferential treat-

ment accorded to the demanding and short-tempered females, the males seem far better able to adjust to new conditions and this may well have evolutionary significance. Of the two, the males can best cope with new problems encountered in any range extension, and perhaps even better survive current situations where they are, it being true that among adult kestrels the males seem always to outnumber the females, making up perhaps 60 percent of the population.

Maybe Mrs. K. had better mend her ways. ☐

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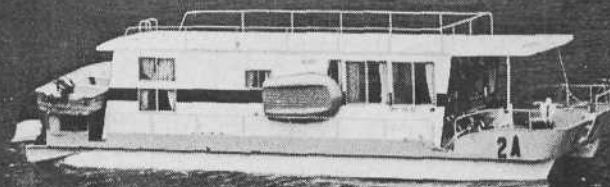
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## DINOSAUR HUNTING

Continued from Page 11

It was not long before he did just that. Clues gained at the first pterosaur track site helped him locate still another exposure of similar tracks in a remote region some 25 miles away. Again, the tracks were in Navajo Sandstone, in what had been a "playa" or desert drylake in the midst of an area of rolling sand dunes, and again there were also tracks of other animal species on the same big slabs of varnish-darkened rock.

At this site, however, there were a few larger tracks visible, some five or six

inches in length. There were also several places where series of tracks crossed the rock, uncluttered by the footprints of other species. One such stride pattern was that of a pterosaur, making it quite valuable scientifically.

University of Utah scientists have decided to study both pterosaur track sites together, as they are obviously contemporary from both a geologic and paleontologic standpoint. Together, these two sites should increase the sparse body of knowledge about such prehistoric flying reptiles by a considerable amount, and perhaps stimulate the search for still other traces of these distant relatives of the giant dinosaurs.

Until scientists can study the two pterosaur track sites in detail, their exact locations are being kept confidential to protect them from possible damage, but footprinted rocks from both sites will ultimately go on public display.

**BIG BONES.** The story of this discovery began two decades ago, but its true value did not come to light until late in 1971.

Ed and Vivian Jones, of Delta, Colorado, were seeking uranium with a

radiation counter, when this instrument located some fossilized bone fragments. Such bone deposits often contain radioactive matter in this region. Later, in 1955, the Joneses found a large intact leg bone at this site. This eventually went on display at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D. C., where Dr. Jim Jensen, of Brigham Young University in Utah, spotted it years later.

After a bit of detective work, Dr. Jensen traced the finders of the bone and, with their help, went on to discover a site which he calls "a veritable junkyard of bones." Several previously unknown species of dinosaur have already been found there, including a new species of giant meat-eater, and another species that appears to be the largest land animal that ever existed.

This last beast was a long-necked herbivore weighing at least 75 tons. He was probably 80 feet long and stood so tall he could look in the top windows of a five-story building. One of his neck vertebra was over five feet long, and one shoulder blade spanned eight feet.

"Supersaurus" was probably a gentle beast who browsed on the foliage of trees. According to evidence found at the discovery site, when he died, his immense carcass washed down a river and lodged on a sandbar. There, it trapped the bodies of still other dead animals before ultimately sinking into the sediments where its bones were later petrified. Today, this "bone quarry" is exposed on a plateau high above a deep river canyon.

Dr. Jensen has visions of this discovery site being developed somewhat like the main display in Dinosaur National Monument, with provisions for public access and viewing while the scientific work continues.

How were the big bones and four sets of ancient tracks found? By their discoverers being interested, knowing what geologic formations to search, knowing where there formations are exposed to easy examination, by spending time in the field and by being sharp-eyed and alert. All of these are requirements that the ordinary rockhound already possesses, or could acquire in a short time, making "dinosaur hunting" still another aspect of an already fascinating hobby.

The formations to search for tracks and other dinosaur remains within southeastern Utah are those of the Trias-

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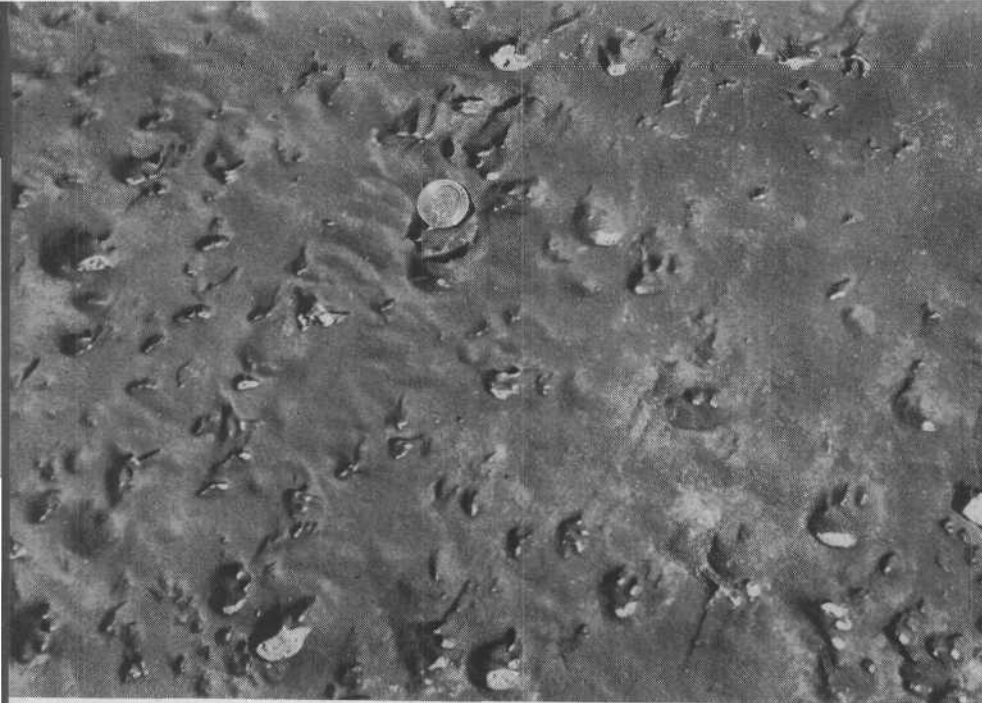
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Close-up view of some of the tracks at the first site of pterosaur tracks, with a silver dollar for size comparison. Windblown sand fills some of the tracks.

sic and Jurassic Periods. The formations within these periods most likely to contain petrified bone or tracks are the Chinle, Kayenta, Navajo, Summerville and Morrison. All the amateur "dinosaur hunter" need do is learn to identify these formations. There are helpful U. S. Geological Survey maps that are color coded to show the formations exposed on the surface. These can be obtained from any U.S.G.S. office, or from local commercial outlets that serve the mineral industry.

Given all the prerequisites for "hunting dinosaurs," what are the chances of finding something? Very good. Given even a few days, a well prepared search is bound to produce some kind of results, if nothing more than some beautifully agatized shards of petrified bone, or a handful of gastroliths, "dinosaur gizzard stones." The chance of discovering distinct fossilized tracks is less but still not bad, given a little more time and plenty of perseverance. The dinosaurs and their smaller relatives were around for 120 million years. In that length of time plenty of traces can be left, plenty of foot tracks can be made in the wet sediments around lakes and streams and rain-filled desert playas.

What should you do if you find something? Well, there are both state and federal laws protecting all types of antiquities. Utah is no exception. Serious collectors should obtain copies of such Acts and observe their limitations.

On a practical level, a few scattered small pieces of petrified bone may be collected without worry, but if any appreciable deposit of "bone" is discovered, or if fairly intact specimens are found, this should be reported to the ap-

propriate land administration office. In Utah, this is usually a local office of the Bureau of Land Management, but may be the U.S. Forest Service or National Park Service, the state parks or forestry service, or some other state agency.

Of course, all finds of tracks should be reported, so that their scientific value can be investigated, and no specimens of any sort should be taken from national or state parks.

So, happy dinosaur hunting, and don't forget to report any significant finds you may make. Who knows? Some day you might have a very important paleontological site name after you! □

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# Rambling on Rocks

by Glenn and Martha Vargas

## Gypsum: No. 2 in Hardness

IT MIGHT appear that gypsum leads a double life, for it goes by two names. The word gypsum is used for the mineral generally, but usually refers to the massive form. The crystalline form is called selenite. This "double identity" feature is carried over into the derivation of the word gypsum. Dana's mineral books give the root as the Greek word, *gypsos*, meaning a rock that is cooked. This does happen in the manufacture of plaster of Paris, as we shall describe shortly. Webster's 20th Century dictionary states that the word *gypsos* means chalk. We will leave it up to you as which might be correct.

The derivation of the word selenite is interesting. It is again from the Greek, *selenites*—the moon. It evidently was called *selenites lithos* (moon stone) because it was thought to brighten and wane with the moon. This probably arose from two of its features. Some pieces of selenite show an internal reflection, and selenite crystals or cleavages scattered on the ground will reflect moonlight. The reflections would be bright at full moon, and obviously none during the dark phases.

To add a further complication name-wise, the mineral has other names, the most common of which is alabaster. This refers to a very fine-grained, tough form that is often used for carving. The derivation of this name is also somewhat double. Originally, the name referred to a pure white calcite which was carved into ointment jars called alabasters. Any biblical references to alabaster are for calcite, and many prehistoric artifacts now in museums that are labeled alabaster, really are calcite. When the change-over from one mineral to the other took place is not certain, but it probably occurred about 2,000 years ago.

Regardless of what we might call the

mineral, it is a calcium sulfate plus water, with the formula  $\text{CaSO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ . The water is a residual from being deposited out of large bodies of water. It is often found in huge beds that once were covered by large lakes or inland seas. The usual deposit is granular-massive, but selenite beds are also known. Some of these occur along the Colorado River. One may be seen on the shores of Lake Mead, another is covered by Lake Powell. The Lake Mead deposit is beautiful—a huge bed of almost snow-white, remarkably transparent material that has been etched by water in what resembles modernistic sculpture. The material that has dissolved away makes the water somewhat hard, as many Southern California residents well know.

One of the most important industrial uses for gypsum is plaster of Paris. The use of this material far outdates any other like material such as cement. It is prepared by grinding gypsum into a very fine powder, and then roasting to completely drive off all of the water that is attached to the molecule. As the mineral is very soft, the grinding is easily done.

When this powder is mixed with water and poured into some type of mold, it takes the water back into the molecule, and sets into a solid piece. Interestingly, during the heating to drive off the water, some of the best energy is evidently absorbed by the powder. When it solidifies after being mixed with water, the heat is given off. During the setting period, the casting is very warm to the touch.

Plaster of Paris is commonly used in building construction to impart a glistening pure white color to plaster. The base for wall plaster in today's construction, somewhat erroneously called lath, is made from plaster of Paris. A layer is covered with cardboard or other coating to make sheets that are commonly called plaster board. There are two areas in our deserts where this lath board is made. One is near the city of Blythe, California, the other on the eastern edge of Imperial Valley, near Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. Both of these manufacturing plants are situated near an ancient lake deposit of very pure gypsum.

Selenite is of interest to the mineral collector. The crystals are members of the monoclinic system, and commonly form as twins. The penetration twins (as illustrated) appear as if one was driven through the other. Often, two crystals



will twin along an edge, producing a "fish-tail-like" form. When either of these are perfectly clear, they can be very beautiful. Selenite crystals can enclose, during growth, such things as mud, other minerals, liquids containing bubbles, and other interesting inclusions. The mineral is sometimes formed during volcanic activity, and has enclosed sulfur crystals.

Selenite has a very perfect cleavage, allowing the crystals to split into flat plates that are somewhat elastic. In this form, they resemble sheets of mica. One of our early experiences with this mineral was the result of it being mistaken for mica.



Near Utah's Zion National Park, there is a sedimentary bed consisting of layers of a low grade coal, called lignite, and a clay containing selenite crystals. We noticed a large crystal in the yard of a farmer in this area, and asked about the source. He called it isinglass (a name for mica plates) and felt that we should not be interested. He readily showed us where the deposit was, but refused to believe that it was not mica. We were able to collect some interesting twin crystals on a hill behind his house.

The lapidary finds the alabaster form excellent for carving. It is tough, but easily worked with simple tools such as knives, saws, files, sharpened nails, etc. The surface will not take a brilliant polish, but after exposure to air, it hardens somewhat so that sandpaper-smoothed surfaces can be made to glisten by rubbing with a cloth. The hardened surface of alabaster is interesting—it is nearly always 2½ in hardness, rather than 2 for the usual specimens.

Another form of interest to the lapidary is the fibrous material known as satin spar. The name comes from the look of satin along the fibrous sides of

this form. Cabochons cut from satin spar may show a fine "eye." Again, the polish is not excellent, but is better than that of alabaster.

Huge beds of alabaster near Tuscany, Italy have produced fine white to colored pieces for many hundreds of years. These have been carved into nearly all imaginable forms. The pure white material has been made into doves and other articles of religious significance. Colored material, as well as the white, is often dyed after carving.

The most interesting use of selenite that we know of was by the early Catholic missionaries of Baja California. There are a number of deposits in the central portion of the peninsula, near the town of Santa Rosalia. Here, the crystals are large, some as much as 24 inches across. These large crystals were carefully cleaved into thin sheets that were used as window "glass" for some of the missions.

One of the most unique natural features composed of gypsum is White Sands National Monument, New Mexico. In all the world, only three dune areas are formed exclusively of this mineral, and here is the largest and most spectacular of them all. Colorado and Australia boast the two lesser ones.

The Monument dunes are the result of rainwater dissolving gypsum out of neighboring rocks, and carrying it to a basin. There, the water evaporates, leaving a crust of tiny selenite crystals. Winds then pick up these crystals and carry them to the dunes of the Monument.

One of today's most important uses for gypsum is in soil treatment. Many soils are very fine silts or clays that quickly compact and exclude air and water. This is especially true of desert soils. If a small amount of granular gypsum is added to the soil when it is worked, these small pieces of gypsum will tend to cleave and swell when wet, and produce a porosity that allow air and water to enter. The powder that is applied to the soil is sometimes known as land plaster. Each treatment is usually good for a number of years before it is finally dissolved by the irrigation water and carried away.

When this happens, the water may make its way to some basin, where it may evaporate, redepositing the mineral, starting the process all over again. □



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Mt. Lowe  
souvenir  
from 1919.

## Desert Turns Back the Clock

In faraway Scotland Curtis Hindson has his memory jolted back 55 years when he visited the United States as a youth.

THE OTHER DAY, very belatedly, I chanced upon your December, 1972 issue and among the articles was Joe Blackstock's illustrated "A Cable Car in the Clouds." Extremely interesting, I thought, but the piece somehow nagged me. Perhaps it was the word "Rubio" which seemed to ring an infinitely distant bell. Indeed, I had that strange "I've been here before" feeling.

Then, quite suddenly, when I studied the illustration of the large cog wheel and the two smaller ones, now lying derelict, reality broke through. These, I knew, were the very self-same wheels which, in their prime and pride, had hauled us up the Mt. Lowe Scenic Railway—just 55 years ago! I dived for an old tin trunk.

We three, pictured on the apron of the car, were a British family, resident in China, on the way to England by way of the States. The year was 1919.

I still remember the trip up Mt. Lowe;

the commercial photographer who took us all on the car at Echo Mountain (was that the great searchlight pictured on the roof of the depot?), the incredibly steep climb up Rubio Canyon (one of the cars was named "Rubio"), Ye Alpine Tavern where I fed the chipmunks, and the telescopes at Inspiration Point. To use a phrase which hadn't then been invented, the view was "out of this world." There was no sign of that other more recent invention—smog.

We greatly enjoyed ourselves in those far-off days. In Los Angeles, there was a visit to Cawston's Ostrich Farm, and to an alligator farm which my father said belonged to an Englishman who came from our own county! We also visited the beaches of Venice, Redondo (where the railroad ran through the main street, I remember), and of course, Long Beach, where I had a great time in the shooting galleries (new to me), on the Jack Rabbit which was on the beach itself, and in the

nearby Plunge. In those days, Long Beach was a lively little town by the sea-side, and I cannot recall any tall buildings.

I suppose we must have spent two weeks in the Los Angeles area, and then it was "all aboard" for the east coast via Albuquerque, New Mexico where one of those trivial incidents occurred, but which remains fondly forever in memory. It was exceedingly hot, and there on the rail depot, to his great and whelping delight, a large dog was being hosed down to cool him off!

Alas, no cable cars apparently now slide up and down Mt. Lowe, and I'm not entirely certain if passenger trains still clang through Albuquerque any more. But way back in '19, we may have done it all in the slow leisurely way, yet we saw a lot of America at ground level, talked to a vast number of people, and generally had a whale of a time. I feel very nostalgic about it now. □



# Letters to the Editor

Letters requesting answers must include stamped self-addressed envelope

## Desert Fan . . .

We enjoy *Desert* so much! Of special interest are the articles covering parts of Oregon. Yes, we have lots of desert up here, although much different from the southern ones. To our great disappointment, illness has kept us here this past winter when we had planned for several months in the south.

MRS. VIRGIL McGEE,  
Riley, Oregon.

## Photographic Booboo . . .

A matter has come to my attention which requires comment and clarification.

In your November, 1973 issue, a photograph which I took in 1972 appeared in your column "A Peek in the Publisher's Poke." The picture showed a number of vehicles parked behind a no trespassing sign and implied that the individuals owning the vehicles were trespassing on the property. This was in error; the vehicles pictured belong to the owners of the property.

GEORGE SERVICE,  
Palm Desert, California.

*Editor's Note: I also add my apologies for the use of this photo and hope that the embarrassment to the innocent parties was minimal.*

## Mystery Carving . . .

From what I can see and from the description in the article, "Oregon's Mysterious Carving," it is my opinion that it is a likeness of Emperor Maximilian. His sparse hair was parted in the middle and combed to each side down to the neckline, which gave the back of his head a flattened appearance.

It is not known what happened to the two groups of loyalists who attempted to save the Maximilian treasure. One group headed for the Pacific, the other group was last traced in the hills northwest of Los Angeles.

ELMER E. STORM,  
Glendora, California.

## Leave It To Beavers . . .

While recently catching up on the back issues I had missed, I read with interest the article by Buddy Mays on the beaver appearing in the July, '73 issue. I, too, have experienced

the surprise of finding beaver in the desert, but am unable to accept Mr. Mays' contention that they were "pushed" there by man.

A check on the history of the Southwest will reveal that some of the very first white men to penetrate the region were following our desert rivers, running traplines for *Castor*. This in areas many hundreds of miles from the nearest settlement.

We can only conclude that man had more to do with where he didn't live (due to overtrapping) than vice versa as his existence was quite widespread during the early to mid-1800s. Now, of course, there is some trend to the reverse—man is putting beaver where there were none before and could not get on their own. In Nevada, for instance, the Department of Fish and Game has been "planting" beaver in streams of isolated desert mountain ranges in order to improve the fisheries by controlling runoff through the beavers' dam building.

Thanks for a continually useful and interesting magazine.

DAVID E. LUTZ,  
Las Vegas, Nevada.

## 4-Wheel or not 4-Wheel . . .

In the April, 1974 issue of *Desert*, I was interested in the article, "Canyon With A Surprise" by Betty Shannon. There is one statement in her article which I strongly disagree with. She states: "The road up Surprise Canyon is in better shape now than during Panamint's heyday, but don't attempt the trip unless you have a four-wheel-drive rig. The grade is very steep and the trail can be rough in some spots." The italic part is what I disagree with. I have made the trip up Surprise Canyon many times and have never used anything but a conventional two-wheel-drive sedan. I have never had any difficulty making the climb. I will say that today's sedans are too low slung to make the trip without a great deal of maneuvering, but it can be done.

I made my first trip in 1934 when Chris Wicht was still living at his camp. I returned several times and each time I had a good chat with Chris. He had a turkey gobbler that made a good watchdog. He'd chase you off the place unless Chris came out to control him.

I have read many articles of desert trips which always state that the trip is for four-wheel-drive vehicles only, but about 95 per cent of them I have covered in a two-wheel-drive vehicle since I began my desert travels some 40 years ago. This was long before the four-wheel-drive vehicle was ever developed for general use. But I presume this four-wheel-drive warning is given to keep inexperienced drivers out of these places. I can navigate anything these four-wheel-drive vehicles do except soft sand, extremely steep slopes, places that are too narrow for my rig and extremely muddy areas. Whether or not you can drive a certain area depends far more on the driver than on the vehicle.

G. W. KORNS,  
San Gabriel, Calif.

*Editor's Note: You are absolutely correct in your presumption the "four-wheel-only" tag saves a lot of people from getting stuck or stranded. In most cases, the areas written up are not highly trafficked and help could be a long time coming.*

# Calendar of Events

JUNE 1 & 2, Sixth Annual Western Gem-boree, sponsored by the Riverside Gem & Mineral Society. Alessandro Jr. High School, Dracea at Indian Sts., Sunnymead (Riverside), Calif. Free admission and parking.

JUNE 15 & 16, "Darwin Days" to be held in Darwin, California will feature swap meet, parade, pancake breakfast. Great area for rockhounds—plenty of camping area—lots of fun.

JUNE 28, 29 & 30, California Federation of Mineralogical Societies, celebrating their 35th Anniversary, join with the Gem & Mineral Society of San Mateo County, Calif., celebrating their 25th Anniversary, for their annual Convention and Show, San Mateo County Fair & Exposition Center, San Mateo Calif. Internationally known speakers, lecturers and craftsmen; special exhibits, banquet Saturday night, June 29th. Camping facilities in fairgrounds.

JUNE 29-JULY 5, All Rockhounds Pow Wow Club of American, Inc., 25th Annual Show, Jefferson County Fairgrounds, Madras, Oregon. Field Trips, Dealer Space, Display Space.

JULY 4-7, Annual Cactus & Succulent Show, sponsored by the Cactus & Succulent Society of America, Inc. 301 North Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, California. Free admission.

JULY 20 & 21, Mt. Jura Gem & Mineral Society's 10th Annual Show, Town Hall, Greenville, Calif. Field Trip Sunday, Snack-bar, Free camping.

SEPTEMBER 7 & 8, 42nd National Show and Convention of the American Begonia Society, Francisco Torres Convention Center, 6850 El Colegio Rd., Goleta, California. Rare and unusual begonias and companion shade plants will be available for purchase. Free admission.

SEPTEMBER 7 & 8, All Rockhounds Pow Wow Club of America, Inc., Mineral Springs Resort, Cle Elum, Wash. Field Trips, Dealer Space.

SEPTEMBER 29 & 30, Carmel Valley Gem & Mineral Society's 14th Annual Show, Exhibition Building, County Fairgrounds, Monterey, Calif. Dealers, special exhibits, demonstrations, music and hot food. Admission, 50 cents, children under 12 free with adult. Dealer space filled.





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